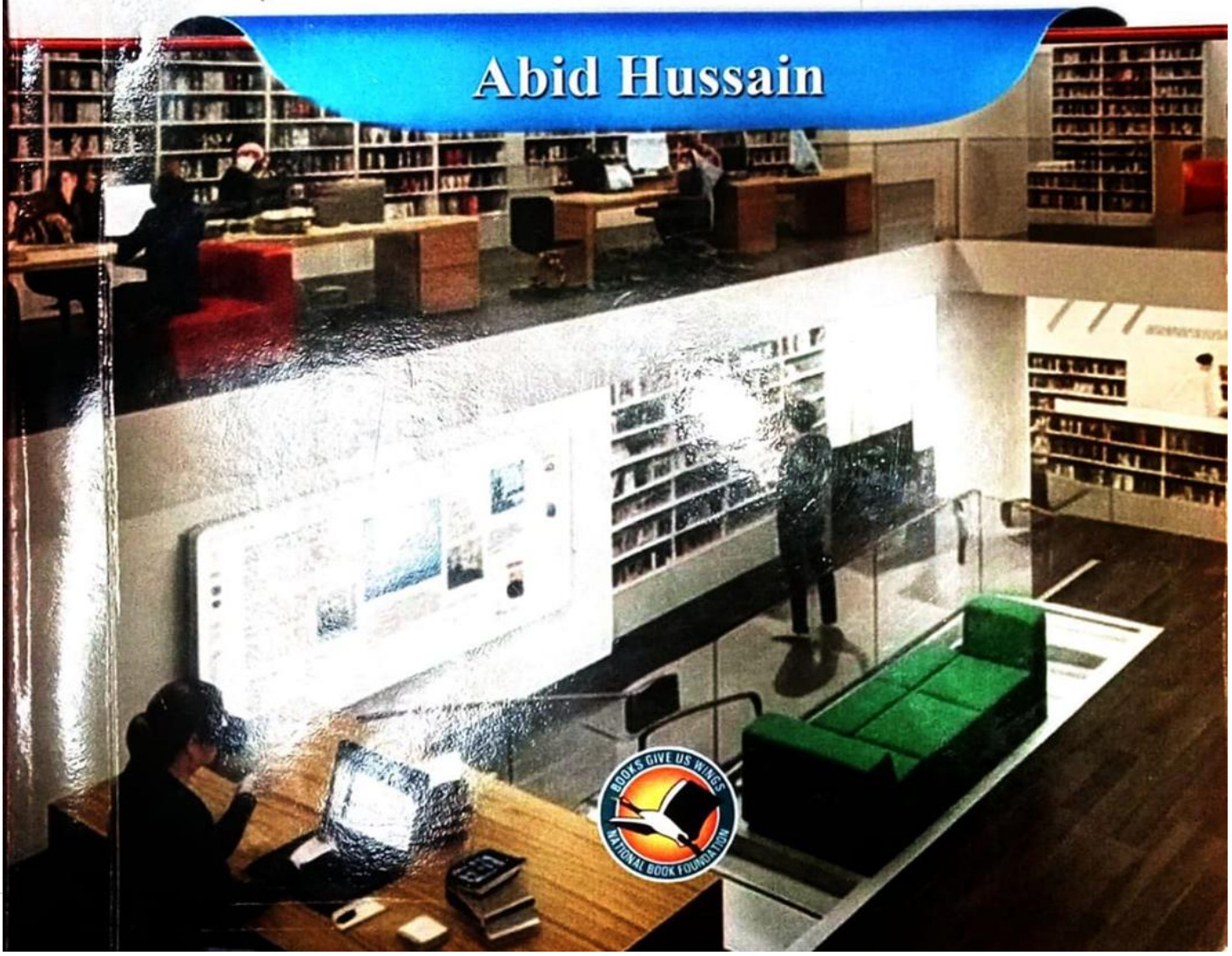
Redefining Libraries in 21st Century

Transformative Roles for Bridging Research, Education, Technology and Society

Abid Hussain



Redefining Libraries in 21st Century: Transformative Roles for Bridging Research, Education, Technology and Society

By: Abid Hussain

Edition 1

Foreword

Redefining Libraries: Their Role and Responsibilities in a Transforming Society is a collection of articles and columns by Mr. Abid Hussain, initially published in various English newspapers. Over the past few years, the author has contributed more than 200 pieces to national and international publications. In this first edition, he has compiled a selection of his writings, offering thought-provoking insights into library-related issues. This book combines these articles to provide valuable knowledge for students, faculty, stakeholders, policymakers, and scholars in librarianship. The author's efforts in compiling this work offer a global perspective, useful for professionals across continents. The book serves as a rich resource of knowledge on librarianship, blending keen observations with clear interpretations of the evolving role of libraries in society.

This edition includes selected articles covering various library-related topics and their impact on multicultural societies. What stands out is the author's personal, first-hand account on the transformation of library services in an ever-changing world. Pakistani authors have yet to venture into such an analytical exploration of library services, making this book a unique contribution. Written in an accessible style, Mr Abid Hussain's work is supported by solid evidence, which adds depth to his narrative. The author has addressed various aspects of libraries in a changing society, Launched every relevant topic untouched. Future editions will certainly incorporate valuable suggestions and feedback from experts.

Abid Hussain
(Deputy Director Library)
Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad

Acknowledgment

I express profound gratitude to Almighty Allah for granting me the strength and perseverance to produce this work, which is intended for both current and future generations. It would be remiss not to acknowledge the invaluable guidance of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), whose teachings have illuminated the path toward righteousness and knowledge.

I extend sincere appreciation to my family for their unwavering support and patience throughout my research journey, particularly my wife and children, whose encouragement has been a constant source of strength for me. The Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad (ISSI) has provided a conducive research environment, which greatly facilitated the development of this volume. I am deeply thankful to the Directors, Researchers, and Staff of ISSI for their steadfast support, which significantly enriched my work.

I also wish to acknowledge with gratitude the mentorship and guidance of my teachers in the Library and Information Science (LIS) Department, whose support has been instrumental in shaping my academic and professional journey. It is with great pride that I reflect on being among the first Pakistani authors to address a broad spectrum of issues at both national and international levels. I am equally appreciative of the organizations that work tirelessly to advance the field of librarianship in Pakistan, particularly the Pakistan Library Association (PLA) as well as the University of Peshawar Library and Information Science Alumni Association (UPLISAA).

This volume is dedicated to all the educators, supporters, students, scholars and editors of English-language dailies in Pakistan, whose contributions have made the publication of this work possible. I would be remiss not to recognize the long-standing support of Mr. Sabir, who has served at the *Pakistan Observer* for many years and has consistently welcomed and encouraged my contributions. In a country where librarianship receives limited attention in both English and Urdu dailies, the *Pakistan Observer* has played a pivotal role in revitalizing interest in this crucial field.

Finally, I welcome constructive feedback and suggestions from experts, which will be invaluable in enhancing future editions of this work.

Abid Hussain
Library Science Scholar

Testimonials for the Book "Redefining Libraries: Their Role and Responsibilities in a Transforming Society"

I have had the pleasure of knowing Abid Hussain for several years, and his passion for library research is truly admirable. His dedication has culminated in this remarkable book, a compilation of his published articles that will undoubtedly benefit library students, scholars, and academics in today's society. As the author, Abid has successfully highlighted the significant and evolving role of libraries in contemporary times. The articles in this book offer a rich collection of insightful knowledge, making it an invaluable resource for anyone in the field of librarianship.

Dr. Asad Khan
Chairman: Department of Library and Information Science
University of Peshawar

Abid Hussain has contributed valuable knowledge to librarians and scholars within the field of Library and Information Science (LIS). This book thoughtfully addresses various issues in the discipline, offering practical solutions that are highly beneficial for library practitioners, academics, and researchers. As the LIS field has evolved significantly in recent decades, incorporating innovative technologies and modern tools, this volume captures the growing accuracy and relevance of the discipline. Each essay presents a distinct perspective, providing actionable insights for real-world application. I highly recommend this volume to librarians and research scholars across multiple disciplines, as well as to LIS students and scholars seeking a comprehensive and insightful resource.

Dr. Saeed Ullah Jan
Chairman: Department of Library Information Science (DLIS),
Khushal Khan Khattak University Karak

The author has addressed a wide range of challenges faced by libraries, librarians, and the general public. While the role of libraries continues to grow at a remarkable pace, there remain critical issues that require attention. Abid Hussain's work offers insightful solutions to contemporary library challenges, demonstrating his exceptional ability to engage both informed scholars and general readers alike. This book is highly recommended for anyone interested in the evolving role of libraries and the issues they face in today's world.

Khush Muhammad Khan
Brig ® and General Manager
Aga Khan Education Service, Pakistan

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List of Acronyms	
AI	Artificial Intelligence
AR	Augmented Reality
ALA	American Library Association
AV	Audio Visual
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
AIOU	Allama Iqbal Open University
ASCII	American Standard Code for Information Interchange
AI	Artificial Intelligence
AR	Augmented Reality
ALA	American Library Association
AUP	Acceptable Use Policy
BD	Big Data
BISP	Benazir Income Support Programme
BLL	Basic Literacy Level
BDL	Broadband Digital Library
CPU	Central Processing Unit
CD-ROM	Compact Disc Read-Only Memory
CILIP	Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals
COVID-19	Coronavirus Disease 2019
CSR	Corporate Social Responsibility
CMS	Content Management System
DLIS	Department of Library and Information Science
DLP	Digital Library Project
DOI	Digital Object Identifier
ETD	Electronic Theses and Dissertations
EHR	Electronic Health Record
E-learning	Electronic Learning
ERP	Enterprise Resource Planning
E-Book	Electronic Book
FAQ	Frequently Asked Questions
FTP	File Transfer Protocol
GIS	Geographic Information System
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GUI	Graphical User Interface
HEC	Higher Education Commission
HTML	HyperText Markup Language
HRM	Human Resource Management
HTTP	Hypertext Transfer Protocol
HCI	Human-Computer Interaction
HEI	Higher Education Institution
HOD	Head of Department
ICT	Information and Communication Technology

IoT	Internet of Things
ISSI	Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad
IFLA	International Federation of Library Associations
ISBN	International Standard Book Number
ISP	Internet Service Provider
IPR	Intellectual Property Rights
IM	Instant Messaging
JSTOR	Journal Storage
JPEG	Joint Photographic Experts Group
JCR	Journal Citation Reports
KPI	Key Performance Indicator
KM	Knowledge Management
KPK	Khyber Pakhtunkhwa
KMC	Knowledge Management Centre
KMS	Knowledge Management System
LIS	Library and Information Science
LMS	Learning Management System
LAN	Local Area Network
LUMS	Lahore University of Management Sciences
LOC	Library of Congress
MOOC	Massive Open Online Course
MR	Mixed Reality
MIT	Massachusetts Institute of Technology
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
MPhil	Master of Philosophy
ML	Machine Learning
MS	Master of Science
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NEP	National Education Policy
NTS	National Testing Service
NLP	Natural Language Processing
NIC	National Identity Card
NDL	National Digital Library
OA	Open Access
OPAC	Online Public Access Catalogue
OER	Open Educational Resources
OS	Operating System
OCLC	Online Computer Library Center
ORCID	Open Researcher and Contributor ID
PDF	Portable Document Format
PIO	Principal Information Officer
PLA	Pakistan Library Association
PRR	Pakistan Research Repository

PhD	Doctor of Philosophy
RFID	Radio Frequency Identification
RAI	Right of Access to Information
RAM	Random Access Memory
R&D	Research and Development
ROI	Return on Investment
RSS	Really Simple Syndication
ROM	Read Only Memory
SMS	Short Message Service
SNS	Social Networking Services
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
URL	Uniform Resource Locator
USA	United States of America
UPS	Uninterruptible Power Supply
UI	User Interface
UPLISAA	University of Peshawar LIS Alumni Association
VR	Virtual Reality
VPN	Virtual Private Network
WWW	World Wide Web
Wi-Fi	Wireless Fidelity
WHO	World Health Organization
WIPO	World Intellectual Property Organization
W3C	World Wide Web Consortium
WAN	Wide Area Network
XR	Extended Reality

Role of Libraries in Information-Seeking Behaviour

Pakistan Today, October 6, 2024

The Merriam-Webster Dictionary defines information as "knowledge obtained from investigation, study, or instruction." Similarly, the Oxford English Dictionary has defined "Information as the communication of instructive knowledge, news of some fact or occurrence." Information has become a vital factor for contemporary society, particularly after the advent of the Internet. Experts in the information field divide all information into six types: (1) Conceptual Information, which is based on concepts, ideas, hypotheses, theories, and beliefs. (2) Empirical Information, which can be obtained from experimentation, verifiable methodologies, observations, and so on (3) Procedural Information is that kind of information that is based on a specific procedure; in other words, if a person already knows about something that how to perform a specific task such kind of information is known as Procedural Information (4) Policy Information, it is closely related with rules and regulations, laws and policies for effective decision-making process. (5) Directive Information. This is a meaningful type of information that provides direction or descriptions to individuals in order to understand concepts and circumstances (6) Stimulatory Information, it includes stimulatory information, which helps stimulate a reaction in order to motivate individuals or groups to take action.

Individuals' information-seeking behaviour varies from generation to generation. Earlier, information acquisition was based on physical means like books, journals, newspapers, and libraries. People relied heavily on experts, professionals, teachers, and librarians for specialized knowledge. Still, today, with the advent of advanced technologies like the Internet, people mostly rely on search engines like Google and Yahoo and digital libraries. Now, people can access millions of information without visiting libraries and institutions with one click. Wilson coined the phrase information behaviour in 1981. He described that "information seeking behaviour is a broad term which involves a set of actions that an individual takes to express information needs, seek information, evaluate and select information and finally use this information to satisfy his/her information needs." According to Girija Kumar "the information seeking behaviour is mainly concerned with the need, what kind of information and for what reason and how information is found, evaluated and used and how the needs can be identified and satisfied. "The question arises as to what role the library plays in the information-seeking behaviour of an individual. The answer is simple: the library of the contemporary era has become the hub of enormous information in both printed and electronic formats. So, it plays a commendable role in shaping information-seeking behaviour both from a historical point of view and in modern times. Individuals are seeking information that is more reliable and credible. Libraries offer access to a wide range of curated information in the form of books, academic journals, databases, and research papers. This helps individuals develop habits of seeking high-quality and verified information rather than relying on biased sources.

Search engines offer vast amounts of information, but most need to be more reliable and factual enough to be trusted. The modern library offers information literacy services to both individuals online and personally. Libraries educate people on how to locate, evaluate, and use this information effectively; in this regard, librarians help them become critical thinkers and train them to know credible and reliable sources. Such credible sources are vital for their academic goals. Libraries of contemporary society offer lifelong learning services; they support their patrons by providing them with a wide range of services and allowing them to seek information that suits their academic goals.

Similarly, individuals can also explore new areas of knowledge, which develops their habit of seeking information and helps their professional development. Libraries also help individuals bridge the digital divide by granting them free access to the Internet and digital resources at home, particularly those who need more time to visit the library physically. Such access promotes equitable information-seeking habits in diverse communities. The library also provides social and collaborative spaces to individuals of contemporary society, where people can collaborate, share their ideas, and work together on Information-

seeking projects. Such collaboration supports research practices among individuals in a society. In short, libraries' role is undeniable in individuals' information-seeking behaviour because they provide access to reliable information, support research activities, foster critical thinking, and bridge the digital divide. In a nutshell, libraries are inspirational sources for people to search for information, evaluate, and use information in both physical and digital formats.

Revitalizing Research Culture in Pakistan

Pakistan Today, September 20, 2024

Pakistan is a nation of immense talent with significant potential for growth in intellectual capabilities, particularly in research and development. Since its independence in 1947, the country has had the misfortune of needing to be on the right track, particularly in education and research culture.

Several interconnected factors hinder the research culture in Pakistan. An adage you might come across is that "money makes the mare go". The insufficient grants from the government for research and development have highly impacted the excellence of the research journey. Most talented brains rely on foreign aid from international organizations with complex terms and conditions. If the government extends a rich budget for Research and Development (R&D), the country will make significant progress in research culture. Research requires compelling infrastructure like laboratories, technology and sufficient access to up-to-date libraries with journals and book databases; and poor facilities make it hard for researchers to stay current with global trends. Most of our institutions need updated libraries, robust laboratory infrastructure, and innovative technology facilities, and the lack of such facilities hampers the quality of research culture in Pakistan.

The other reason for poor research culture is needing more recognition and incentives in research organizations. Every advanced country encourages talented researchers for their scientific contributions and rewards them with handsome allowances; unfortunately, in developing countries like Pakistan, there is a lack of recognition awards to encourage them, and such impediments prevent the government from excelling in research. In our academia, promotions are made through teaching performance rather than an individual's research output.

Education is a crucial factor for quality and excellence in research. The education system in Pakistan is based on Rote Learning, especially at Primary and Secondary Levels. Such learning avoids critical thinking among students. A strong brain requires strong analytical skills, which are highly necessary for the research culture in Pakistan. The education system in Pakistan is full of flaws; research takes place at the M.Phil and PhD levels, and the first four years are based on coursework, which repeats the same courses covered in master-level programmes. Approval of the topic and synopsis takes a few months in academia.

Similarly, there needs to be more research scholars and supervisors. The scholars always need assistance from their supervisors to guide them, but supervisors need more time for their scholars. The Higher Education Commission of Pakistan should bind research scholars to undergo rigorous research training to develop their concepts at MPhil and PhD levels. Inadequate training in research methodologies and limited opportunities for hands-on research training impact the research culture. There is a big gap between policymaking and researchers in academia. The HEC can bridge the gap between policymakers and researchers at the university level. HEC must reform campus research culture and train scholars in industrial and policymaking research.

Similarly, there is a brain drain as trained people migrate on a large scale to other countries for better livelihood, funding, and other facilities; such large migration needs to be improved in quality research.

Those who come back from advanced countries aspire to promote a research culture in the country. Still, the stakeholders and bureaucratic leadership style create hurdles for them to extend such skills. The social and cultural barriers are other crucial factors that hinder research culture in Pakistan; there is a lack of a

research mindset in the country, and many people in Pakistan consider research secondary to professions like Medicine, Law and Engineering.

The language barrier is another factor that impedes research culture because all quality research is published in English, which is the second language for all Pakistanis; this can also create restrictions and communication gaps in the international community. Most Pakistanis are conducting research for degree programmes, which are dumped on library shelves. A person who spends two or three years on research ends up on the shelves, and people are still waiting to open it for practical experiences. Most graduates from Pakistani Universities need more international collaborations, like symposiums and conferences. Several Pakistanis are sending their abstracts and proposals for international conferences, and ultimately, they are denied participation because their findings are not scientifically addressed.

Last but not least, ChatGPT and other research tools, such as Quilbot and other AI applications, have declined the quality of research culture in Pakistan. Institutions must avoid and ban these applications and discourage students from using them. Otherwise, it will have negative consequences for the country in the future. In order to address these challenges, the government of Pakistan must implement systematic reforms in education and R&D. Much investments in education and research training will undoubtedly lead this nation to a prosperous future.

Pros and Cons of E-Learning

Pakistan Observer, September 4, 2024

Elliott Masie coined the term e-Learning in November 1999 for the first time. While delivering a speech at a Tech Learn Conference held in the USA, Masie stated that we are now stepping into e-learning. He further explained, "eLearning is the use of network technology to design, deliver, select, administer, and extend learning". E-learning is online education, training, and knowledge sharing on the Internet. E-learning can occur anywhere, anytime, with electronic gadgets and can be utilized in various settings such as skill development, continuing professional development, corporate training and academic education, etc.

The term e-learning got immense acceleration in the era of the COVID-19 pandemic when education went viral online and ways of schooling transformed from traditional learning to online learning. During Corona's time, learning has been facilitated by the widespread adoption of computer and internet technology. The world has seen a surge in mobile devices in the early 2000s, and they have been transformed into many shapes, such as smartphones and tablets. Earlier, mobile phones were used to make a call, SMS, etc., however, today mobile phones are gadgets with diverse features like calls, texts, social media applications, and multimedia files and now it has become a source of e-learning.

E-learning has become the most common activity for upgrading education, learning new skills, and training individuals. People in contemporary society prefer e-learning over traditional ways of learning. Earlier, Generation Y, born between 1980-1994, preferred the conventional way of learning. Another Generation class called Z was born between 1995 and 2012 and preferred hybrid ways of learning (digital and printed resources). Generation Alpha, born between 2013 and 2025, prefers digital documents like PDFs, multimedia, etc. There are ten types of e-learning, and one is Asynchronous Online Learning; under this learning, the learner accesses online material to complete their assignment. The second type of e-learning is Synchronous online learning, where the learner interacts with instructors and peers; web conferencing and Zoom meetings are a few examples.

The third type of e-learning is blended learning, which offers face-to-face instruction to each participant and is helpful for real-time guidance. The fourth type of e-learning is mobile learning. Here, Individuals share their knowledge, and people learn it online. The fifth type of e-learning is gamification for alpha generations, the learning is fun through games. Some common examples of this learning are leaderboards, points systems, rewards and more. The sixth most common type of e-learning is micro-learning, where the instructor gives a module to solve in 2-4 minutes. The seventh type of learning is virtual reality learning; Therefore, the learner uses a virtual reality device to learn online, as in real-world practices. Video-based learning is the most common type in the present century; learners get insightful information from videos. The learner is free to gain knowledge of complex topics through hearing and seeing. The ninth most common type of e-learning is learning through podcasting. Podcasting offers diverse topics using digital audio to inform individuals; here, the learner gets advice from experts in their discipline in more convenient ways.

Last but not least, social learning has become the most common type of learning in contemporary society. People go to online forums, social media channels, and chat rooms to interact with each other, exchange ideas, and much more. E-learning has both prospects and challenges in time management; every online learning programme requires effective time management, such as reading at least 3-4 hours a day to pursue academic excellence. Technical difficulties are yet other factors for online learning; low-speed Internet and outdated gadgets are a few crucial factors.

The biggest hurdle for online learning is distraction while studying online; such distraction diverts individuals' attention from academic education. Lack of motivation from the learner is also a big challenge; the learner must be studious with physical and mental skills. Digital literacy is yet another common challenge for online learning.

E-learning requires computer skills and knowledge of various software. Technological barriers are the most common challenges for e-learning because people in the Y generation do not know more about technology, and such kinds of technology barriers affect e-learning. Unlike traditional learning, in online learning people always feel isolated which is terrible for their health and mental capacity. Extended reading periods in an online environment can strain the body, affecting eyesight and spinal health and leading to various health issues.

E-learning: How to go Online

Pakistan Today, September 3, 2024

Elliott Masie used the term eLearning in November 1999 for the first time. While delivering a speech at a Tech Learn Conference in the USA, Masie stated that we are now stepping into e-learning. He further explained, "e-Learning is the use of network technology to design, deliver, select, administer, and extend learning". E-learning is online education, training, and knowledge sharing on the Internet. E-learning can take place anywhere, anytime with electronic gadgets and can be utilized in various settings such as skill development, continuing professional development, corporate training, or academic education. The term e-learning got immense acceleration in the era of the COVID-19 pandemic when education went viral online and ways of schooling transformed from traditional learning to online learning. During this pandemic, learning has been facilitated by the widespread adoption of computer and internet technology. The world has seen a surge in mobile devices in the early 2000s, and they have been transformed into many shapes, such as smartphones and tablets. Earlier mobile phones were used to make a call, SMS and with a few other functions, however, today mobile phones are gadgets with diverse features like calls, texts, social media applications, multimedia files and so many different things. Mobile devices are now an e-learning source for general education and business activities.

In today's era of information technology, many companies from large enterprises to small startups use e-learning. E-learning has become the most common activity for upgrading education, learning new skills, and training employees in different disciplines. The days when people used traditional methods of learning (such as in-person classes) are gone; now, digital tools have transformed the learning attitude of our youngsters.

Generation Y, born between 1980 and 1994, preferred the traditional way of learning, But Generation Z, born between 1995 and 2012, preferred hybrid ways of learning (Digital+printed resources). Generation Alpha, born between 2013 -and 2025, solely relies on digital documents like PDFs, Multimedia files and other electronic gadgets.[1]

Some people believe that there are ten types of e-learning. Asynchronous online learning is the most common type of e-learning that offers total leverage to the learners; under this learning, the learners can access online material to complete their assignments anytime from anywhere. The learners sometimes access learning resources through the Learning Management System (LMS). Here the learner relies on pre-recorded lectures, and online discussion forums without having to participate in live sessions. The second type of e-learning is Synchronous Online Learning, where the learner interacts with instructors and peers. Web conferencing and Zoom meetings are famous examples of this kind of learning. Every learner comes online regardless of location, and everyone participates simultaneously in this kind of learning.

The third type of e-learning is blended learning which offers face-to-face instruction to each participant. Such learning is helpful for employees who aspire to enhance their skills with real-time guidance. The fourth type of e-learning is ubiquitous learning or mobile learning. Here individuals share their knowledge through mobile or smartphones, and the readers then access these readings via mobile or tablets without hesitation or limitations. The fifth type of e-learning is gamification, the most common learning method for alpha generation. Under this learning, the youngster uses games to overcome mental barriers and make learning more fun. Some common examples of this learning are leaderboards, points systems, rewards and more.

The sixth most common type of e-learning is microlearning, where the instructor gives the learner a module of information to solve. Learning only lasts two to four minutes to hone their learning skills. The seventh type of learning is virtual reality learning. This kind of learning is an innovative way of learning, where the learners are given a virtual reality device to learn online in the most effective ways without risks associated with real-world practices. Here the learner gets into some other classes held in advanced countries and participates in them like in the real world. This kind of learning has been practised in Western countries, but very few organizations in developing countries have stepped into it. Video-based learning is the most common type in the present century, where learners get insightful information from videos. Through this kind of learning, the learner can learn complex topics through hearing and seeing. The ninth most common type of e-learning is learning through podcasting. This kind of learning has gained immense recognition in the present century, as podcasting offers diverse topics using digital audio to inform individuals in everyday society. Here the learners get advice from experts in their discipline in more convenient ways.

Last but not least, social learning has become the most common type of learning in contemporary society. Through this learning, people go to online forums, social media channels, and chat rooms and interact with each other to exchange ideas and much more. E-learning offers both prospects and challenges in Time Management. Every online learning requires effective time management, such as reading at least three to four hours daily to pursue academic excellence. Technical difficulties are yet other factors for online learning; low-speed Internet and outdated gadgets are a few crucial factors. The biggest hurdle for online learning is distraction while studying online, which diverts individuals' attention from academic learning. Lack of motivation from the learner is also a big challenge, as learners must be educated with both physical and mental skills. Digital literacy is yet another common challenge for online learning. E-learning requires computer skills and knowledge of various software. Technological barriers are the most common challenges for e-learning because the people in the Y generation do not know much about technology, and such kinds of technology barriers affect e-learning.

Unlike traditional learning, in online learning people always feel isolated which is terrible for their health and mental capacity. Extended reading periods in an online environment can strain the body, affecting eyesight and spinal health and leading to various health issues. E-learning presents both advantages and disadvantages. With this in mind, individuals can choose between online and traditional learning methods.

Role of Librarians in Information Literacy

Pakistan Today, July 26, 2024

Paul G. Zurkowski coined the term 'Information Literacy' in 1974 for the first time and articulated as information-literate "anyone who had learned to use a wide range of information sources in order to solve problems at work and in his or her daily life". The UK-based Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals (CILIP) has defined Information Literacy skills as "Information is knowing when and why you need information, where to find it, and how to evaluate, use and communicate it ethically".The proliferation of information in various areas has become a complex phenomenon in our daily lives. The term gained pace after the post-industrial 21st century dawned. We all rely on information and need it to survive in society.

The question is how to correctly find, understand, and use the information. The abundance of information has become an obligation for everyone to find the most accurate, relevant, and timely information without wasting time. The acquisition of such skills is termed Information Literacy Skills. Information can be found in organizations, manufacturers, libraries, workplaces, media, and the Internet. The information is increasing each second and comes in an unfiltered format.

Similarly, people need clarification about its authenticity, validity, and reliability. Hence, people need different skills to overcome such hectic conditions, so they need help from Information Literacy (IL). The expanding quantity and uncertain quality of information create too many challenges in choosing the most appropriate and desired information. Information Literacy skills enable individuals to extract desired information from vast amounts of data for personal and business needs.

People in a society need help in location, evaluating, using and communicating the information. Particularly after the invention of the Internet, Data smog and information explosion. Data Smog refers to the overwhelming flow of information that confuses individuals and makes it difficult to manage. With the fast-increasing information, an individual must change their information-seeking behaviour. In an academic environment, students and faculty members should learn special skills known as information behaviour skills. Information Behaviour Skills (IBS) teaches us how to recognize information, where to locate it and how to use it effectively. In a society, information with practical skills is helpful in the decision-making process. Using effective curricula is crucial for practical information skills, as it not only enhances the skills of individuals in universities but also prepares them for practical life.

The world is overwhelmed with information, and its magnitude will increase exponentially. When you try to search Google for the term 'Information Literacy', it will yield a whooping 1,060,000 web pages. Considering the complexities of Information Communication Technologies ICT skills in the current arena, librarians must seek information literacy skills to equip themselves with the latest skills to fulfil their patrons' demands. In the 21st century, librarians should not only learn traditional skills but also fundamental computer literacy skills to meet the changing needs of their patrons. In the contemporary environment, librarians should change their services from traditional "Control-Oriented" to modern "Value-Driven" and user-oriented information centres.

As technology advances rapidly, librarians in developed countries are adept at handling technological challenges. In contrast, librarians in developing nations are slower to acquire ICT skills due to financial constraints and inadequate ICT infrastructure. Librarians in developing states should adhere to information literacy skills within their limited resources. Albeit, they need sound knowledge of the collection, organization, and dissemination of knowledge. Still, the Librarians with a technical understanding of the

technology surge should prepare themselves. To prepare patrons for the information age, librarians must equip them with current trends.

There are various dimensions for librarians to enhance their information literacy skills; a few elements worth noting are information fluency, library instructions, bibliographic instructions, information competencies, and the users' education. It is also necessary for the patrons to acquire literacy skills from the concerned librarians, particularly skills like the need for information, the resources available in the libraries, how to find the correct information, the need to evaluate the result from the chunk information, the ethics, and responsibility of its usages, how to communicate this information effectively. Last but not least, how to manage correct results in the findings.

Experts have set some core standards for information literacy skills, which include the recognition of information, the searching for information in effective and efficient ways, the knowledge of critical evaluating of information, the management of information, constructing new concepts or creating new understanding from the acquired information, the uses and knowledge of the information and its ethical, legal, and economic aspects. In short "In the era of advanced technology, a person without information literacy must either adapt to new ways or risk succumbing to serious mental strains."

Library Role in Community Building

Pakistan Today June 23, 2024

In her book (Beautiful Creatures), Kami Garcia, an American writer, said, "Without libraries, what have we? We have no past and no future". Considering this quote, I thought deeply about the importance of libraries in societies. We must establish more libraries to extend justice to society. As society grows alarmingly, their need for information also grows. Undoubtedly, the library plays a pivotal role in the society where we live, communicate and transfer our knowledge from generation to generation. The library provides access to a vast range of information and resources, fosters literacy and education, and supports people's lifelong learning services. It serves as a community hub and a great source of social interactions and cultural activities.

Libraries ensure equitable access and preserve cultural heritage. They empower societies with enriching knowledge and research education. They help promote educational resources for the general public, provide access to vast information, and offer free public access to books, among other things.

In today's era of information technology, libraries grant access to digital media and offer internet services to support the research needs of their community members. The library also helps youngsters search for jobs; every library acquires newspapers daily, which help them find jobs that interest them. It organizes educational programme like book talks and author's discussions and invites industrial experts to empower the youth with their robust jobs. The library provides equitable information access to all community members without caste, creed and educational background. It also bridges the digital divide of society; those who take an interest in printed books are using these books for study purposes, and those who are interested in online access are also using them. It helps the members to keep them in safe and quiet study spaces. Every library has a specific corner for academic scholars. Libraries provide professional development courses to young community members and serve children's programmes. In the COVID-19 era, libraries worldwide offered health information programmes for their community members and invited eminent health specialists to inform the local community on preventive measures.

The library is an excellent hub of government information. The performance of different ministries can be found in the libraries, such as economic surveys, educational budgets, population statistics, and so on. Modern libraries provide material in local languages and resources in multilingual formats like Chinese, Russian, Persian, etc. It preserves the local history archives as well as the history of other states for the decision-making process. Many libraries organize environmental awareness programs like reducing smog, Eco-friendly workshops, water conservations, energy conservation programmes, greenhouse movements, and community gardens. Modern libraries invite specialized groups of online programming like how to earn through e-commerce; it empowers the youth to make their livelihood in an online environment if they fail to find their jobs at the local level. They educate the students to join the cryptocurrency programmes, Amazon, Shopify and too many other sources, which inspire them to contribute to government remittances. They also train youngsters with robust technologies like AI, the Internet of Things, Augmented and Virtual Realities. Modern libraries organize programmes for their community members named Makerspace. Under this programme, experts from different disciplines encourage people to utilize various resources and tools to bring innovations, creativity, hands-on learning, etc. A few notable maker space projects include sewing machines, embroidery works, crafting, laser cutting, and computer with design software, etc. Almost all libraries worldwide provide information literacy programmes that aim to inform the members on how to browse and explore library resources and services. They are trained to access academic journals, e-books, magazines, etc. Modern libraries organize community outreach programme in order to increase access to available resources, promote literacy rates and support the education needs of their members.

Inter-library Loan services are another excellent aspect of our libraries, which support the research needs of their patrons by contacting the local library to provide reading materials on loan for a specific period. The library plays a tremendous role in the community's cultural diversity; it supports its members beyond ethnic backgrounds, religious beliefs, economic backgrounds, and social practices.

Libraries are the day's needs; society can only grow in the right direction with them. R. David Lankes, a professor and Director of South Carolina Library, rightly said, "Bad libraries build collections, good libraries build services, great libraries build communities."

Factors Influencing School Libraries in Pakistan

Pakistan Today May 17, 2024

The Collins English Dictionary defines a School Library as “a library within a school where teachers and students can access books and other resources.” A school is an educational institution where students acquire knowledge, values and skills through structured instructions and learning experiences from their teacher. The mission of a school library is to support and enhance the learning level of students, teachers and the community through resources and services that promote literacy, facilitate learning and foster intellectual growth in the community living in the schools.

School libraries are essential in providing students with access to a wide range of informational resources like books, periodicals, multimedia material, and digital databases in order to explore diverse topics and deepen their understanding of the subject beyond what is covered in the classroom. The school library's motto is to promote students' literacy skills to make them critical thinkers and lifelong learners in the future. The school library plays a commendable role in their students' cultural and intellectual enrichment. It supports the school curriculum and encourages students to engage in inquiry-based learning. School libraries allow students to explore their topic of interest and engage them in independent inquiry to grow professionally.

Some scholars believe that school libraries are excellent sources of inspiration in promoting their students' digital literacy and intellectual curiosity. School libraries promote a sense of belonging, community, and shared intellectual pursuits. In other words, school libraries are essential to the educational ecosystem, fostering a culture of inquiry and promoting literacy and lifelong learning services.

In advanced countries like the USA, China, Germany and France, the role of school libraries is very crucial. They are considered a pillar of personal growth, intellectual capability, and the lifelong journey of students, according to the American Library Association report on overall libraries. As of the 2022 report, there were 131,848 libraries in American states; public school libraries were 82,300, and private school libraries recorded 22,991. Private schools are preferred over public schools in developing countries like Pakistan. The education systems at both public and private sector schools are in a harrowing state of affairs. According to education statistics of the Pakistan Institute of Education, a subsidiary part of the Education Ministry, there are a total 313,418, including public and private schools. Most of these schools lack educational quality and need toilet facilities, drinking water, and playgrounds, among other things. Among these alarming issues, only a few schools have small libraries to show the stakeholders how civilized we are. These libraries are available in urban areas only. The schools in rural areas do not even have their own buildings, and most students study under the trees. The situation in Sindh and Balochistan schools is that they live under God’s mercy.

Even though the position of elite schools like Beaconhouse, city schools, convent schools, OPF and other schools serving the defence forces is that they are equipped with rich libraries, playgrounds, drinking water and rich laboratories, they are still using these services to attract customers and show them that how literate they are.

The position of public schools in Pakistan is worse than that of private schools. Public schools in Pakistan face numerous problems like budget constraints, large student populations, government oversight, and emphasis on accessible education. Most of the buildings in urban areas are filled with huge populations, and there is no single room to maintain and sustain a library to meet the intellectual growth of the children.

Though official documents state that each school should have a small library with up to 3000 books, teachers diminish the library building to a classroom or reserve it as a standard room.

Various factors influence the library structure in Pakistani schools: Limited resources for school libraries, lack of qualified staff like trained librarians, infrastructure challenges, language barriers, and low reading culture among teachers and students. A question, however, arises in mind: who is responsible for the poor culture of the libraries? Undoubtedly, government authorities, stakeholders of the schools, educational institutions, and above all, the unqualified staff with BA degrees and Inter certificates. What is to be done? There is a dire need for concerted efforts to highlight these issues in various forums like the National Assembly and social media sites like Facebook and Twitter. Above all, complaints should be filed against the school mafias who fool poor people. Investing in school libraries will help improve literacy rates, enhance educational outcomes and foster a love of learning. Let's raise a voice on different forums and equip the school with rich libraries.

Challenges in School Libraries

Pakistan Observer, May 15, 2024

COLLINS English Dictionary defines a school library as "a library within a school where teachers and students can access books and other resources. In other words, a school is an educational institution where students acquire knowledge, values and skills through structured instructions and learning experiences from their teachers. The mission of a school library is to support and enhance the learning level of students, teachers and the community through resources and services that promote literacy, facilitate learning and foster intellectual growth in the community living in the schools. School libraries are essential in providing students with access to a wide range of informational resources like books, periodicals, multimedia material and digital databases in order to explore diverse topics and deepen their understanding of the subject beyond what is covered in the classroom.

The school library's motto is to promote students' literacy skills to make them critical thinkers and life-long learners in the future. The school library is commendable in the students' cultural and intellectual enrichment. It supports the school curriculum and encourages students to engage in inquiry-based learning. School libraries allow students to explore their topics of interest and engage them in independent inquiry to grow professionally. Some scholars believe that school libraries are excellent sources of inspiration in promoting students' digital literacy and intellectual curiosity. School libraries promote a sense of belonging, community and shared intellectual pursuits. In other words, school libraries are essential to the educational ecosystem, fostering a culture of inquiry and promoting literacy and life-long learning services.

In countries like the USA, China, Germany and France, school libraries play a crucial role in personal growth and intellectual development, serving as a cornerstone of students' lifelong learning journey, as the American Library Association states. In the USA alone, there were 131,848 libraries in 2022, with 82,300 being public school libraries and 22,991 private school libraries. Private schools are often preferred over public ones in developing nations like Pakistan. However, both public and private schools in Pakistan face significant challenges. According to the Pakistan Institute of Education, out of 313,418 total schools, many lack basic facilities like toilets, drinking water, and playgrounds. Few have small libraries, mostly in urban areas, leaving rural schools with inadequate infrastructure, where students often resort to reading under trees.

The situation in Sindh and Balochistan schools is that they live under God’s mercy. Even though the position of elite schools like Beacon House, city schools, convent schools, OPF and other schools serving the defence forces are equipped with rich libraries, playgrounds, drinking water and rich laboratories, they are still using these services to attract customers and show them how literate we are. The position of public schools in Pakistan is worse than that of private schools. Public schools in Pakistan face numerous problems like budget constraints, large student populations, government oversight and emphasis on accessible education. Most of the buildings in urban areas are filled with huge populations and there is no single room to maintain and sustain a library to meet the intellectual growth of the children. Though official documents state that each school should have a small library with up to 3000 books, teachers diminish the library building to the classroom or reserve them for the standard room.

Various factors influence the library structure in Pakistani schools: limited resources for school libraries, lack of qualified staff like trained librarians, infrastructure challenges, language barriers, and low reading culture among teachers and students. A question, however, arises in mind: who is responsible for the poor culture of the libraries? Undoubtedly, government authorities, stakeholders of the schools, educational institutions and, above all, the staff members lack more qualifications with only BA and FA certificates. What is to be done? There is a dire need for concerted efforts to highlight these issues in various forums like the National Assembly and social media sites like Facebook, Twitter, etc. Above all, complaints should be filed against the school mafias who fool poor people. Investing in school libraries will help improve

literacy rates, enhance educational outcomes, and foster a love of learning. Let's raise a voice on different forums and equip the school with rich libraries.

Use of Mobile Technology in Libraries

Pakistan Today, May 9, 2024

Technology has gained significant importance in the 21st century. New and innovative technologies have undoubtedly changed how we live, interact, and communicate. The last two decades have witnessed new and emerging technologies like augmented reality, blockchain technologies, Artificial Intelligence and the Internet of Things, etc. Among them, the use of mobile technologies is gaining more and more advancement every day. In the modern era, mobile phones have become essential for communicating, interacting, and forming sound relationships. Mobile phone use is increasing alarmingly in developed and underdeveloped countries. As per the recent statistical report of the Pakistan Telecom Authority (PTA), at the end of February 2024, mobile subscribers increased from 189.44 million to 190.18 million in Pakistan. Different mobile technologies have been introduced in Pakistan, like smartphones, e-book readers, tablets, portable music players, handheld gaming devices, and many others. Among these tools, the use of mobile phones has surprisingly changed the way people interact and communicate.

Advanced information and communication technology has become a significant segment of our lives. These new tools improve people's ability to reach, obtain, and communicate information and quickly access the growing volume and variety of data in one click. The mobile device is one of the essential tools of contemporary society that can be viewed in everyone's hand as a mobile device. Students of the current era can only survive with mobile phones, whether at school, college, or university. Numerous applications have been introduced by advanced technology to share and communicate information. At the same time, people can send and receive messages, photos, videos, and emails, check travel itineraries, purchase tickets for sports, and concerts and navigate online resources for study and research purposes. As we have noticed, mobile technology has become a necessity of the hour, and users need it to access essential information, stay connected, and efficiently manage tasks in today's fast-paced digital age. Still, people in developing countries like Pakistan use it more for entertainment than study and research.

The present article sheds light on the use of mobile in research and educational activities. Modern libraries offer extensive services to their end users, like interacting with patterns to learn about the resources and services of the libraries. Additionally, libraries aim to meet their patrons' research needs. As modern educational institutions transform their traditional methods to modern information networking, mobile services intertwine users with institutions. It helps them stay up-to-date with what is happening. Libraries in advanced countries use mobile services after the advent of advanced technologies and 3G networking. Since then, advanced nations have used mobile technologies to reach end users without obstacles. Libraries in developing countries are still deciding whether to adopt these technologies. A few notable libraries have already interconnected mobile services within their libraries to share fresh arrivals, navigate library locations, use virtual reference services, receive event notifications, conduct library tours and orientation, and do other things.

Library operations have evolved from a traditional setup to a hybrid model due to advanced technology (mobile technology). Modern libraries are not limited by time, IP address, place, and such but allow users to access library content at any time and from any location using mobile phones, tablets, and similar gadgets. Most libraries have developed mobile applications to complement their library services and resources and offer an easy way for people to access the extensive information in a library's collection. It also allows users to navigate desired information in the online catalogue, reserve space, request inter-library loan services, e-journal database, digitized thesis and in-house search, and others. Academic libraries are subject to internal and external forces that cause and necessitate organizational change and development; hence, the use of mobile technology plays a pivotal role in the development of organizations. Libraries must embrace new and innovative technologies to serve users' academic needs. Mobile phones can provide users with information and resources anytime and anywhere. The concept of mobile phones

in library services is not new; many libraries worldwide have already provided SMS services in earlier days, but modern technology has transformed the way users interact with technology.

Information in earlier days took a lot of work to obtain. Mobile phones have made it readily and easily available because new applications have made library operations more sophisticated, like reference services, circulation services, current awareness services, lending services, etc. Mobile technology has become the need of the hour for modern libraries, and without it, no library can enhance its services in the right direction.

Library and Information Science Unveiling its Scientific Foundations

Pakistan Today, April 28, 2024

A research paper by Fredrick Kiwuwa Lugya, published by Emerald Insight in 2013, argues a few attributes that make Library and Information Science (LIS) an established scientific field. The study further highlighted that LIS is a scientific field whose hypotheses, theories and laws continue to be tested for validity by other LIS and non-LIS researchers under the same conditions and published in peer-reviewed journals and conferences. Apart from this paper, further research deepened my insights towards the field in order to unveil whether LIS is a scientific discipline or not. After searching more papers, I concluded that, like other disciplines of natural and applied sciences, libraries and information have also gained the status of scientific disciplines for many reasons.

This discipline deals with systematic study, organization of information, and management of information resources in a scientific way that meets the information needs of individuals in society. Thus, I have explored a few principles which gauge library discipline as a science. Firstly, come theory and principles. With other science disciplines such as biology, physics, chemistry, and so on, Library and information science is also guided by the theories and principles that help to explain and predict phenomena related to the information behaviour of individuals. Similarly, the LIS discipline systematically defines the rules of information retrieval, information, organization, and management of information. These theories provide scientific frameworks to understand the complex dynamics of information in a society where we live, interact and share information. Similarly, the LIS discipline is the systematic study of various other disciplines, such as creating information, organizing information, dissemination, and retrieval of information scientifically. This systematic approach involves data analysis, research methodologies and a theoretical framework to fathom them scientifically.

Library and information science is interdisciplinary in theory and practice. Sometimes, this subject is dealt with in management sciences, while in some countries, it has been considered a social science. LIS is drawn from various disciplines like computer science, communication studies, sociology, psychology, and other similar disciplines, which is why it is deemed a science subject. This discipline integrates knowledge and methodology from different disciplines to address information-related challenges and opportunities. In other words, LIS scholars empirically conduct research to investigate information and related phenomena based on evidence and empirical data to advance knowledge in the field. Such evidence-based practices and policies in Library and information science centres differentiate this discipline from other humanities disciplines, and such empirical research makes them a scientific discipline.

Some scholars believe that the LIS discipline applies scientific principles and methods in its practices, such as retrieving and acquiring information, organizing information, and managing it in a scientific way that can be accessed for practical use by the readers. Similarly, this discipline integrates technology for classification systems, metadata standards, and other tools that facilitate information organization and retrieval. To stay abreast of emerging trends, tools, and best practices in the field of LIS, it also supports the lifelong learning of library customers and patrons. These are a few arguments that regard LIS as a scientific discipline, but more rigorous research is required to expand its scope as a scientific discipline. In short, LIS applies different scientific procedures like systematic methods, principles, theories, practices, and ways of continuing development.

In every scientific discipline, some ethical codes make them different from other disciplines. Similarly, the LIS discipline also has its ethical considerations, which guide librarians to follow these moral principles to govern the conduct of professionals in handling and disseminating information ethically. Some ethical considerations include censorship, privacy of scholars, intellectual freedom and equitable access to information in a society. These ethical practices make LIS a scientific discipline. Some scholars believe that any scientific discipline follows scientific principles and laws across different contexts, these principles are not limited to specific geographic regions or cultural backgrounds; similarly, Library and information science is based on universality and is applicable across the globe. Objectivity is a core issue of any scientific field. Objectivity is based on specific methods and interpretations, and LIS disciplines worldwide strive for objectivity in their methods to minimize bias and subjective influence in data collection and analysis.

Moreover, every scientific discipline firmly believes in continuous development. Similarly, LIS is also a dynamic field that evolves occasionally. LIS changes itself dynamically according to the needs of society and the information needs of individuals, and similarly, the changes in technology also affect the discipline of LIS. In other words, staying abreast of emerging trends, tools, and best practices in the field of LIS also supports the lifelong learning of library customers and patrons. These are a few arguments that regard LIS as a scientific discipline, but more rigorous research is required to expand its scope as a scientific discipline. In short, LIS applies different scientific procedures like systematic methods, principles, theories, practices, and ways of continuing development.

Empowering Tomorrow: Libraries in the Digital Age

January 2024, Pakistan Today

Keeping in mind the evolving needs of the users, library services have grown significantly in the changing landscape of technology. Libraries of today's era are experimenting with new and innovative services that abreast faculty, staff, students, and a diverse society. Libraries in advanced countries are rich with resources and services; however, developing countries like Pakistan are doing more with fewer resources. One prominent service offered by libraries in Pakistan is the Online Public Access Catalogue; this service allows users to search and access material remotely. Users have been granted access to check the availability of books, reserve materials, and manage their accounts online via the Internet.

The other service offered by Pakistani libraries is Online Digital Collection. In the age of information technology, librarians provide access to a vast array of digital resources like e-books, magazines, academic journals, and audiobooks to quench their research thirst. People can access these resources by login and password from anywhere, anytime, via the Internet.

The most prominent services offered by Pakistani libraries are rich resources of Higher Education Commission Digital Library Services; under these services, Librarians provide access to users via a Virtual Private Network (VPN) where users can access these rich resources using the VPN services from home anywhere and anytime basis. Some prominent databases are Taylor & Francis, JSTOR, Emerald Database, Science Direct, Project Muse, and much more. Libraries subscribe to these electronic databases and provide users with access to scholarly articles, journals, and other academic resources. Multimedia resources are yet another opportunity offered by academic libraries; these include streaming services, online video collections, and other sources of audiovisual materials. Similarly, the present-day library offers Virtual Reference Services (VRS), which allow users to get assistance from library staff via e-mail, video conferencing, chat, and other social networking websites like Facebook, WhatsApp, etc.

The most incredible service offered by today's libraries is Interlibrary Loan. The library that lacks current resources sends requests to other libraries to provide their help for short periods; these services are called Interlibrary Loan Services. As information increases in a wide range, it has become difficult for libraries in advanced countries even to purchase every document; in this case, libraries borrow material from other libraries to fulfil the needs of their patrons. It is an injustice to forget the role of information literacy programme offered by libraries in contemporary society; under these programmes, librarians in academic settings organize training programs to enhance the information literacy skills of their patrons. The users are trained to critically evaluate and use information effectively.

The prime purpose of libraries in the current era is to provide users with computer workstations, software to support their research activities, and internet access to explore academic resources in libraries and beyond. Many libraries in advanced and developing countries offer collaborative spaces, providing a hall, room, or discussion forum where people from diverse communities share their information through meetings, events, workshops, and seminars.

Libraries are hubs of collaborative space. Many libraries charge nominal amounts for external users, and most libraries offer these opportunities free of cost to their registered members. Libraries of today's age provide online courses, seminars, workshops, and webinars on various topics that are useful for patrons' academic and personal development. Libraries of contemporary society offer community engagement

programme like book clubs, author talks cum, community outreach initiatives, etc. These forums bring together intellectuals from different spheres. Libraries also provide specialized services to individuals in the surrounding area, like traffic awareness programme, health literacy programme, scholarship opportunities in foreign countries, and children's programmes, in order to enhance their awareness about issues of concern. In the changing information landscape of technology, the Library offers a wide range of services to meet the community's diverse needs. libraries play a crucial role in fostering education, literacy, and community engagement. The community as a whole must utilize these services for maximal benefits.

Role of Web Librarianship in Emerging Technologies

Daily Times, January 13, 2024

A Washington Post writer, Mr Linton Weeks, articulated, "In the nonstop tsunami of global information, librarians provide us with floaties and teach us to swim." In the changing landscape of digital technologies, librarians are changing their attitudes toward the web world, which is called web librarianship. The term web librarianship is specialized in web content and refers to a specialized person who focuses on managing and providing access to information resources on the World Wide Web (WWW). Web librarians play a significant role in ensuring that the information is organized, accessible, and meets the academic needs of their patrons. Different scholars in advanced countries define the term web librarianship in various aspects. A few qualities that contribute to web librarianship are digital collection management an understanding of information architecture, proficiency in web technologies, and strong user-centered design skills. This is highly imperative for web librarians to curate and manage digital collections; these include acquiring, organizing, and preserving digital collections such as books, research papers in journals, and material about academic needs. The second aspect of web librarianship is the role of information architecture; under this construct, the librarian designs and implements the structure of websites and online platforms to foster library resources to end users. Ensuring the long-term accessibility and usability of digital content is a critical aspect of web librarianship.

Owing to this method, librarians organize information in a logical order that is easily accessible for patrons to navigate the desired information in their time of need. The third aspect of web librarianship is metadata standards for cataloguing. Different organizations produce various metadata standards, and creating accurate and comprehensive metadata is essential for effective information retrieval; here, web librarians apply cataloguing principles to digital content, ensuring that each item is appropriately described and indexed for easy discovery. In the digital realm, web librarians must provide support and services to patrons who can easily navigate online databases, guiding users in using digital content. Ensuring the long-term accessibility and usability of digital content is a critical aspect of web librarianship; here, the librarians preserve the digital content for practical use by patrons. Web librarians are up-to-date with emerging technologies in the field. Web librarians integrate these technologies into library services to enhance user engagement. Web librarians play a crucial role in promoting information literacy skills among patrons. Here, librarians guide the evaluation of online information, educate the users about copyright and intellectual property rights, and guide them on using these digital resources for practical information. Collaboration with IT staff and librarians in the era of technology often work closely with IT professionals, content creators, web developers, and stakeholders to ensure that digital services align with the overall goals of the academic organization. Accessibility to information is the critical priority of web librarians; here, librarians pay complete attention to ensuring that digital information is available to all users, including those with disabilities. Web librarians always engage in outreach efforts to promote digital resources and services in organizations and beyond. For this, web librarians prioritized digital outreach and marketing plans to promote its services. Here, the librarians create online tutorials, develop marketing strategies, and use social media platforms to raise awareness of the library's digital offerings. Albeit the use of web librarianship is increasing at alarming rates in developed nations, there are specific challenges associated with web librarianship; these are information overloading, privacy concerns, technological obsolescence, copyright and licensing issues, user education and information literacy, funding constraints, constant technological changes and so many other problems. Still, the role of web librarianship is a dynamic and evolving field. Professionals in this field need to understand both traditional and advanced

technological skills. Librarians with web skills should understand the use of digital technologies to manage and provide access to practical information.

A leading library technologist, Roy Tennant, has rightly said, “Only librarians like to search; everyone else likes to find.”

Poor Reading and Library Culture

Pakistan Today, December 6, 2023

Reading culture refers to the attitudes, behaviours, and practices within a community or society, whereas library culture reflects how frequently individuals in a society or community use library resources. Both reading and library cultures encourage people to read regularly, whether for leisure, education or personal grooming. These cultures play a crucial role in shaping individuals' and communities' intellectual and educational development. Unfortunately, like other developing countries, Pakistan also faces the same challenges. A robust reading culture includes many reading materials such as books, magazines, newspapers and online content. Readings explore new horizons and take you to the height of your success. Dr Seuss (American children's author, novelist and cartoonist) rightly said, "The more you read, the more things you will know. The more that you learn, the more places you'll go."

The cultural environment has a profound impact on human personalities. An ecological reading culture injects a hundred ideas into minds. The library is the best place for reading about leisure, education, and personal grooming. Walter Savage Landor, an English writer and poet, articulated that "Nothing is pleasanter than exploring a library."

Both reading and library culture are interconnected, as libraries are essential institutions which foster a positive reading environment. Libraries provide access to a wide range of reading material, create space for community engagement, and contribute positively to the community's intellectual and cultural life. A society with a sound reading culture and rich libraries can lead a nation in a more informed, educated, and progressive direction.

In short, sustained effort, community involvement, and constant strategies based on the population's evolving needs will promote reading and library culture in Pakistan.

There are multifaceted challenges to Pakistan in both reading and library culture. Here are some key reasons why Pakistan lacks poor reading and library culture. Socioeconomic factors include limited access to education, leading Pakistan to a lower inclination towards reading. The lack of educational opportunities affects the literacy rates of our youth. The other factor includes economic challenges; the people facing hiked prices prioritize basic needs over educational and cultural pursuits. People need to find time to visit libraries or buy books to read. Infrastructure and Resource Constraints: in Pakistan, most districts need well-established and well-equipped libraries, and the absence of adequate infrastructure hinders people's access to reading materials and library services.

Limited availability of books: in Pakistan, libraries in some regions need more books to fulfil the demands of the local communities. Such limitations prevent people from visiting libraries and reading books of their choice. Similarly, in every district, very few book suppliers exist, and these do not offer the desired books as per the demand of their society; this can also affect the reading and library culture. Cultural priorities: the entire culture of Pakistan needs to have reading habits; in every big city, you will find cinemas, hotels and parks, but very rarely can you find a library for the general public; this can also affect the reading and library culture. Most people in developing countries prefer the latest fashion instead of buying books. The language barrier also hinders our society's reading habits; very few people can read and speak English, and libraries need cultural books in Sindhi, Pashto, Urdu, Hindko, etc. This can also affect the reading habits of our youngsters.

Technological changes have badly affected the reading habits of our youngsters; every individual in Pakistan has a costly smartphone and full internet access. They are browsing entertainment other than reading materials; this culture has yet to leave any stone unturned in Pakistan's decline in reading habits.

Lack of awareness and promotion of library services hinder the reading habits among the masses in Pakistani culture. What is to be done? The question, however, arises in minds.

The Pakistani community should be engaged by conducting outreach programmes in schools, colleges, and universities to raise awareness about the importance of reading habits. Libraries play a pivotal role in promoting education and literacy programmes; they should strive to initiate literacy programmes to encourage reading habits— collaborate with local community leaders, educational institutions and NGOs to organize reading events and workshops. Digital engagement, such as library websites, social media platforms, and other similar online services, may bring the community together for reading. Multilingual collections at every shop and Library will further enhance the reading habits in Pakistani communities. Promotions of local authors, study spaces, mobile libraries, and so on are the best tools to empower the youth of Pakistan in terms of reading and library culture.

A Step-by-Step Guide to Writing Literature Review

The Diplomatic Insight, September 8, 2023

A literature review is a systematic and critical assessment of published literature related to the research question or topic. It is meant to demonstrate the researcher's familiarity with the subject and establish the context for the research. This short piece highlights some valuable steps for knowledge seekers before writing a literature review for their thesis or other academic purposes.

Step 1: Exploration:

The first step involves exploring the topic you intend to investigate. In an online environment, such as the Internet or a database search, take note of the keywords most relevant and closely related to your research question. For example, suppose your research question is about poverty alleviation in Pakistan. In that case, you should consider "poverty" as one keyword, "alleviation" as the second keyword, and then combinations like "poverty alleviation" or "poverty alleviation in developing countries," and so forth.

Step 2: Conducting Research:

The second step involves conducting comprehensive research using academic databases such as Journal Storage (JSTOR), Taylor and Francis, Springer, ProjectMuse, and other freely accessible online libraries that pertain to your research question, such as Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ), Semantic Web, and other open-access repositories.

In these sources, you can explore research articles, e-books, reports, and videos that are relevant to your research question. Utilizing proper keywords or controlled vocabulary is essential for effectively exploring a wide range of literature.

Step 3: Selecting Resources:

This step is relevant for extracting the desired material from the chunk. In this step, you will screen and select resources closely related to your research question. This step will require reading the titles, abstracts, or conclusions to identify the most relevant information from the extensive literature.

Step 4: Reading and Analyzing Selected Literature:

The fourth step involves thoroughly reading the extracted literature and critically analyzing the selected resources. Here, you can highlight findings using markers and pointers to emphasize significant insights from the selected literature.

Step 5: Organizing Literature

The fifth step entails organizing the most pertinent literature in a folder to identify patterns and gaps in existing research. In this step, you can group the sources based on common themes, findings, and methodologies most relevant to your research question.

Step 6: Identifying Gaps in Existing Literature

This step includes investigating the gap in the existing literature and your research question; in this step, one should pay attention to any missing areas that need to be addressed. This step will take you to the position of a broader academic context.

Step 7: Synthesizing Information

In this step, the focus is on synthesizing information gathered from the findings of existing literature. One should summarize their notes and cohesively organize them into paragraphs systematically.

Step 8: Critical Evaluation of Literature

In this eighth step, you can critically evaluate the literature by assessing its strengths and weaknesses. Selecting the most credible items to incorporate into your research findings is essential. This step involves assessing the validity and reliability of the relevant conclusions.

Step 9: Structuring Findings

In the ninth step, you should organize the findings well-structured and sequentially. Typically, the process starts with an introduction outlining the research question, then presenting the main themes or findings and concluding with a summary.

Step 10: Review and Edit the Literature Review

In this tenth and final step, the focus is on reviewing and editing the literature review. Here, one should carefully examine the entire writing to identify any inconsistencies and gaps in the arguments. It is essential to avoid any mistakes during this phase.

Finally, literature is more than just a summary of sources extracted from a wide range of data. Instead, it involves critical analysis of previously published literature. Conducting a literature review using a quantitative or qualitative research method can be challenging; it demands careful attention, time, energy, and a deep understanding of the research topic, which enhances your academic reputation. Researchers may need to correct mistakes while reviewing the literature. Avoiding these errors, such as summarizing without critical analysis, is essential. Instead, one should summarize the findings and critically assess how each source contributes to the existing research question. Another common mistake is chunking material from various sources. To avoid

this, focus on selecting the most pertinent sources for your research questions. Please do so to prevent confusion in finding the correct and precise research materials.

Additionally, it is crucial to steer clear of sources that need more authenticity, such as open sources without publisher links or author information. Many researchers rely on old and outdated literature, which can result in inaccurate conclusions or obsolete information. Furthermore, it is essential to avoid literature that lacks critical evaluation. Lastly, literature published in high-impact factor journals should be prioritized, as it has been reviewed by editorial boards and cited by numerous researchers.

Role of Digital Skills in Academic Libraries

Pakistan Observer, July 14, 2023

DIGITAL skills have evolved significantly due to the increasing integration of technologies in library services. Librarians in the past were limited to four walls and had no concern for the patrons outside the libraries. Now conventional librarianship is transforming into hybrid and embedded librarianship. The increasing demands of the patrons have compelled the librarians to adopt the latest technologies to fulfil their current demands as digital transformation is on the rise and affecting every industry to manage their operations. Libraries are changing agents of robust technologies and are experiencing new tools to reach their current and retrospective patrons. For this, they have adopted a new mechanism named digital skills. University of Nevada, Los Vegas has explained, "Digital skills are defined as the ability to find, evaluate, use, share and create content using digital devices such as computers and smartphones". Digital skills are a set of highly desirable skills for current employers; without these skills, none will hire you. A few famous examples of digital skills are Social Media, Search Engine Marketing, Content Marketing, Data Analytics, Mobile Marketing, Email Marketing, Social Selling, Strategy & Planning, Pay-Per-Click Marketing and Video to promote business goals.

When we talk about digital skills in library operations, these are communication, gateway skills, creation, device ownership, life-long learning, information skills, online life, privacy and security, workplace and mobile services. Nowadays, library patrons hold different skills and demand the same from the librarians to answer if they ask any queries. Librarians with low IT knowledge can only treat them with the same skills for a few reasons: they do not accept change in their libraries and rely on the old traditional setup. Libraries in developing countries are still evolving with lock shelves and poor financial structure. Developed countries have already adopted these new skills to put the patron on the right track. Some popular digital skills that need to be learned are information retrieval skills and online searching; in such cases, librarians in Pakistan should be proficient in utilizing various online databases, electronic resources and search engines to help users find relevant information without wasting time in this regard they should learn the advance search techniques and strategies. The second ordinary digital skill the librarians in Pakistan should know about is the management of digital collections like e-journals, ebooks and other digital resources. In such cases, the librarians should acquire, catalogue, organize and provide access through a mechanism that is easily accessible. Information Literacy instruction is another skill for librarians in developing countries like Pakistan. Librarians should know about information literacy skills and how to motivate students and faculty members to utilize these resources critically and effectively.

Technology troubleshooting is yet another skill in the age of digital transforming abilities. In this regard, librarians should educate themselves about computer hardware, software and network systems. They should know more about technical issues related to computers, printers and other devices. In this age of information and communication technologies, it has become difficult for librarians to acquire, organize and give them access to what the library has procured. Digital preservation and archiving have become the need of the hours. Librarians should know about digital preservation techniques and practices. They should learn how to archive digital material to ensure their long-term accessibility. Open access and scholarly communication are on the surge, and librarians should be advanced in these skills. These include Open Educational Resources (OER)، copyright issues of digital material, and issues related to scholarly communication. Familiarity with Integrated Library Management Systems (ILMS) has become essential to librarians' jobs; they should know about library management systems like circulation, cataloguing, user management, serial publications, etc. The most modern services advanced countries offer in their libraries are digital reference services, including e-mail reference, video conferencing, live chat, chatbot, etc. These skills bring more charm to library services in developing

countries like Pakistan. Librarians should also understand research data management, such as documentation, data organization, data repositories, and data citation practices. Now, the question arises: how can librarians come forward with these skills? In this regard, they should be proactive in keeping up with emerging technologies and trends; for this, they should regularly attend professional development programme, use YouTube and consult professional colleagues to enhance their digital competency. In this age of the digital landscape, librarians should abreast themselves with modern digital skills.

Establishment of a Park Library: A Proposal
Global News Pakistan, July 12, 2023

By Abid Hussain

What is a Park

According to the Collins Dictionary, A park is a public land area with grass and trees, usually in a town, where people relax and enjoy themselves. There are ten types of Parks:

1. Urban Parks: a kind of park in cities and other incorporated places that offer recreation
2. National Parks: a natural park developed and preserved by the federal government
3. Town Square Parks: typically situated in the centre of a town
4. State Parks: State parks are under the administrative governance of each state
5. Active Parks e.g. playgrounds, ball fields, swimming pools, gymnasiums
6. Passive Parks: open space and provide for the preservation of the natural environment
7. Amusement Parks: with diverse attractions, such as rides & games, entertainment events
8. Pocket Parks They are often built on tiny, irregular public or private property,
9. Water Parks, water play areas such as water slides, swimming pools, water playgrounds
10. Linear Parks that run beside canals, rivers, streams, defence walls, motorways

Each park has a unique purpose within its communities but commonly aims to provide recreation. Parks' purposes are to establish the biological, geological, and cultural importance of nations and protect their people's biodiversity. Parks are sources of recreation, education, and science for the public.

What is a Library

Online Dictionary of Library and Information Science (ODLIS) explained that"Library from the Latin liber, meaning "book." In Greek and the Romance languages, the corresponding term is bibliotheca. A collection or group of collections of books and other print or nonprint materials organized and maintained for use (reading, consultation, study, research, etc.)

Types of Libraries

There are numerous types of Libraries; these are:

1. **National Library**

A National Library is a library which has the duty of collecting and preserving the literature of the nation within and outside the country. Thus, national libraries are those whose community is the nation. Examples include the British Library and the London Library of Congress USA. National Library, Islamabad, Pakistan.

2. **Academic Library**

Academic libraries serve colleges and universities, their students, staff and faculty. Larger institutions may have several libraries on their campuses dedicated to serving particular schools such as law and science libraries. Many academic librarians become specialists in an area of knowledge and can have faculty status.

3. **Public Library**

Public libraries serve communities of all sizes and types. Wherever you live, there's bound to be a local public library nearby! As the name implies, public libraries serve the general public, "from cradle to grave" as more than one public librarian has been heard to say. Public libraries often have departments that focus on areas of service, such as youth, teens and adults. Public Libraries are divided into Large Public Libraries, Mid-size Libraries, and Small and Rural Libraries.

4. **School Library**

School libraries are usually part of a school system and serve students between kindergarten and grade 12. Many are called media centres, and librarians are often required to have a second degree in education or a certificate in school media.

5. **Special Library**

Special libraries offer unique opportunities to work in a specialized environment of interest, such as corporations, hospitals, the military, museums, private businesses, and the government. Special libraries can serve particular populations, such as the blind and physically handicapped, while others are dedicated to special collections, such as the Library of Congress or a presidential library.

What is a Park Library?

A library was established on the park's premises where people of different ages can use printed and non-printed materials for study, research, reference, and recreation.

The purpose of Park Library

The primary purpose of the park library is to provide resources and services in various media to meet the needs of individuals and groups for education, information and personal development, including recreation and leisure. They have an essential role in the development and maintenance of a democratic society by giving the individual access to a wide and varied range of knowledge, ideas and opinions. Some other purposes of Park Libraries Included are as under;

- **Education:**

'Supporting both individual and self-conducted education and formal education at all levels.'

- **Information:**

'The park library is the local information centre, making all kinds of knowledge and information readily available to its users.'

- ❖ **Personal Development:**

‘Providing opportunities for personal creative development

- ❖ **Children and Young People:**

‘Creating and strengthening reading habits in children from an early age.’

- **Freedom of Information**

‘Collections and services should not be subject to any form of ideological, political or religious censorship, nor commercial pressures.’

Why to Establish a Park Library:
The purpose of Park Library is as;

- ★ It should be a safe place for social community.
- ★ A place with proper light and ventilation.
- ★ A place where reading materials are organized for visitors.
- ★ Visitors should be able to reach library materials quickly, and the materials should be visible to them.
- ★ The library’s interior should be colourful with posters, Pictures and charts.
- ★ There should be a place to display Students' creative artwork, poems, essays, etc. It should be a place where facilities are available for visitors to participate in discussions, seminars, etc.
- ★ Reading Room should be open to general people throughout the week.
- ★ Library opening hours should be displaced outside the library near the entrance.
- ★ It should be a place where almost everyone can quickly obtain library services.
- ★ A place where parents and teachers should provide resources and services and participate in the library activities
- ★ It should be a place managed by a “trained teacher librarian”.
- ★ It should be a place where visitors' rights are protected, and it should promote the concept of child participation. There should be a suggestion box in the park library to get suggestions and ideas on improving the library and its services.
- ★ The services offered to people should be depicted in the Mission Statement of the Park Library.

Resources in the Library

Resources inside the Library include (1) printed and (2) non-printed materials, which include books, periodicals, newspapers, and reference books. The nonprint material includes audiovisual materials and electronic materials.

The Park Library offers services within the Park Library with following services;

- ➔ Circulation (Issue/Return)
- ➔ Article index of selected periodicals.
- ➔ Compilation of specialized bibliographies on demand.
- ➔ Weekly display of new arrivals.
- ➔ Inter-Library Loan and Inter-Library Reference Services.
- ➔ Reprographic services, Photocopy and Printing services
- ➔ Reference files of selected topics.
- ➔ Library orientation to fresh members.
- ➔ Supply handouts to guide the users in using the Library.
- ➔ Facility to reserve books.
- ➔ Membership to external users.
- ➔ Individual attention and help the users locate their required reading material.
- ➔ Display of prospectus for various courses of national and international universities.
- ➔ Current awareness service to members through email
- ➔ SMS for messaging to members.
- ➔ Display of Course Reference Collection
- ➔ Exhibitions at the Library
    - I. Lecture series
    - II. Film Screenings
    - III. Newsletter
    - IV. Book Launches
    - V. Internet Services
    - VI. Study Cabin

Sources of Funds for Park Library:

Park libraries can get funds from the following sources:

National funds distributed to states or provinces. The municipal corporation funds public libraries generated from car parking, taxes, and other revenue-generation tools. The librarians need to apply for these funds. Sometimes, funds are raised in-house by conducting auctions for the sale of knowledge resources.

Ways of Fundraising:

The ways of funding raising are enumerated as under;

1) The library managers need to chalk out a practical resource mobilizing strategy and execute it efficiently to raise funds for the library. The following are some ways of resource mobilization
2) Contacting a donor agency for financial support.
3) Conducting fundraising programs and events, inviting guests to attend and request donations for the library.
4) Keep donation boxes at the happening places such as banks, social gatherings, and other public areas to request donations. This practice generates a smaller amount, but it is appreciable.

5) Setting collection points for donations such as furniture, vehicles, stationery, and tools.
6) Requesting volunteer support for the library from colleges and schools. Fundraising from selling a publication and offering buying schemes.
7) Private donations, which are given by the charity services and interested• individuals.

Selection of Resources

The key to success is selecting the right resources because teachers and students will find what they want and keep using the library. The library must find a balance between enriching and supporting and meeting the recreational reading needs of ordinary people. It should inspire and challenge students with new authors, genres and areas of interest. The collection should accommodate the varied cultures and abilities of students. Selection of resources needs to be planned and should be based on following;

A. Community priorities.
B. The available budget.
C. Evaluation of the existing collection to identify areas requiring additional resources. Library staff should maintain a consideration file of topics, authors and genres for inclusion.
D. It recognizes the selection criteria.
E. The library's collection development policy.
F. Replacement of lost or damaged items.
G. Suggestions from staff and students.

Technology Integrated Learning in School Libraries in Pakistan

Global News Pakistan, July 12, 2023

The Pakistani education system has been divided into six levels: Preschool, Primary School, Middle School, High School, Secondary School Certificate, Higher Secondary School and University programmes at undergraduate and graduate levels. Each school has attached libraries that fulfil the needs of teachers and students. In developed countries like USA, UK, Germany, France, etc. the role of school libraries is remarkable. Children in schools grow their education while studying in libraries. Teachers are nurturing the reading habits of their children. Most of them gain reading-oriented skills before getting certificates. In developing countries like Pakistan, school libraries are limited and non-active in reading habits; most of the government schools at the urban level do not even have a library building, and few schools in large cities have libraries with limited old books. Reading habits and libraries are intertwined with each other. Some elite schools like Beaconhouse, Educator, City, Saint-marry, Convent, and OPF, as well as schools associated with defence foundations, have rich collections in their libraries. However, these schools create a vast generation gap between the poor and rich masses.

School librarians are now at a crossroads in the instructional role, as technology has evolved the role of librarians in the era of the 21st Century; now, a school librarian is not confined to the four walls of a library and a bookkeeper. They should engage themselves with instructional technologies to become instructional technology specialists. Technology has become a crucial element for teaching and learning, so teachers and librarians should play the role of educators through technology integration programmes. In the last few decades, librarians were just custodians of bookshelves. Still, now the role of school librarians is entering another period of radical change, and that is the combination of information specialists with technology integration. There are a few ways to convert the role of school librarians from information specialists to technologically integrated learning: use of databases for children, turning to Kindle and e-books, open learning initiatives, instant messaging your librarians, fostering a love of reading with Electronic Resources, Developing ICT capabilities of students, marker space, Netflix for Kids, Story bird and so on. This technology-integrated learning will lead a school librarian to tech-savy practices. Technologies have been deployed in almost all education sectors.

Similarly, school libraries are now practising the same tactics. However, the role of librarians should be more tech-savvy instead of passive learners in the old traditional setup. Elite schools in Pakistan should equip their libraries with the latest technology to make their students more prolific. However, the government schools in Pakistan have been deprived of library buildings and meagre budgets. However, the Ministry of Education must enhance the library budget and ensure school libraries in each urban and rural school; otherwise, the generation gap between the lower and upper classes will create a catastrophic change in Pakistan. In this age of technology, the role of school librarians is complementary and would benefit both students and school staff. Several accessible technologies should be integrated so that children in government schools are up-to-date with the latest developments. Libraries in Pakistan should opt for integrated learning at the school level.

Use of Robotic Technologies

Daily Times, July 7, 2023

Undoubtedly, cutting-edge technologies have brought tremendous challenges in the library field. Still, it has influenced librarians' habits and patrons' desire to explore information in a minimum amount of time. Few worthy technologies like virtual and augmented realities, 3D printing, the Internet of things mobile applications, etc. Among these technologies, Robotics is attractive and controversial for library operations.

Robotic Technology is not new in contemporary society. It was implemented in the industrial setup in 1960 to do challenging and risky jobs. The word robot stems from the Czech word robot, which means forced labour or serf. This technology was used by Karel Capek in 1920. A robot is an electromechanical machine led by computer software or an electrical circuit. Few computer engineers have argued that a robot is a programming device that mimics human behaviours and assists people in their complex tasks. According to Builtln, a few popular types of robots are pre-programmed robots, autonomous robots, humanoid robots, teleoperated robots and augmented robots. Each robot has different functions to work: a Humanoid Robot mimics human behaviour, and an Autonomous Robot works independently without involving humans. Teleoperated robots are semi-autonomous robots that use wireless networks to permit human control from a safe distance. The augmented robot can be used to increase the present human skills or replace human work with the help of machines. Robots can improve work efficiency in ways humans cannot do in less time. After the advent of advanced technologies, people in developed countries have transformed their businesses from human labour to robotic machines. The augmented robot can be used to increase the present human skills or replace human work with the help of machines.

Many industries and world businesses are converting manual operations to machine-associated technologies. Several popular technologies, such as artificial intelligence, big data, the internet of things, and augmented reality, have been implemented on larger scales in various businesses. Libraries are changing agents of advanced technologies. Robots in the library field are not new to be discussed. Many large libraries have deployed robotic technologies to retrieve books, media and other library materials. Some libraries have used it to locate the material on the library shelves. Some have used it for security purposes, while others used it to answer the inquiries posed by the patrons. Most of the largest libraries in the USA, UK and Canada use robots for reference and directional queries, while others use them for information literacy instructions. Some libraries use them for space management, while others use them for self-navigating at night. Few have deployed them for speech recognition and machine translations, while some have introduced robot librarians that help patrons retrieve their desired information in the least possible time.

Many developing countries like Pakistan use Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) and barcode technologies to detect the theft of items from libraries, while others use them to count library visitors daily. Some libraries in developing countries use biometric systems to address potential users. In contrast, others have deployed this technology to reach out to more extensive resources like big data and data analytics in operational and service-oriented aspects. Several libraries have adopted chatbots

and voice assistant services for university libraries, while others have implemented them for charging and discharging library items without the involvement of librarians.

Robots help direct users toward libraries; they ensure library security, answering library users when they ask. It can also monitor the user's activities inside and outside. It can maintain a quiet and reading-oriented environment inside the library. In developing countries like Pakistan, some obstacles are associated with robotic technologies while deploying them in library operations. A few of them are job opportunities, comprehension of library users' inquiries, and some other impediments like poor policies about technology usage and costly machinery. Few have observed that robots may gradually replace the job of real librarians; however, in countries like Pakistan, the most significant deterrents to implementing robots in library operations are funding constraints and the mindset of stakeholders.

Nevertheless, robotic technologies are rising in developed countries; however, librarians in Pakistan still need to be fully aware. Fewer have implemented it, while others are using it for experimental purposes. In Pakistan, fewer industries have stepped into robotic technologies; however, libraries still need this fascinating technology. Scholarly work regarding robotic technologies is scarce in education and library fields; however, after reading a few papers, it was understood that privacy, equity, ethics, and developing tools are a few impedes that could hamper robots in library services. Robotics and AI provide faster services; we can advance our library services with these disruptive technologies. The government of Pakistan and its policymakers should think about robotic technology to empower administrative practices in education and libraries. Sean Gerety rightly said, "The technology you use impresses no one. The experience you create with it is everything."

Green Library Movements in Pakistan

Global News Pakistan, July 12, 2023

Global warming and climate change has been a topic of great concern for the entire world and has harmful consequences for human life across the globe. World institutions are converting their businesses to go green in all sectors of life. Libraries are places of great ideas and deal with the general public in almost all countries. The modern world is trying to minimize the negative impact of the natural environment and maximize indoor environment quality through careful site selection and enhanced conservation of resources like water, energy, paper and recycling waste disposal in order to protect the environment from colossal catastrophe. Different scholars have used the concept of Green Library in different lenses. The International Federation of Library Associations (IFLA) and other associations are working jointly to create a conducive environment that is helpful for humanity.

IFLA has taken commendable steps such as project planning, financial considerations, and designing buildings with energy reduction in mind. These efforts aim to make libraries environmentally friendly and safeguard against non-traditional security threats prevalent in the world today. While libraries in developed countries actively adopt green practices, developing countries like Pakistan have seen only a few organizations take such steps to protect the environment. These organizations have adopted policies similar to those of their developed counterparts. Some scholars believe that university libraries have been reluctant to adopt sustainability indicators; however, most librarians and stakeholders in Pakistan need more effective policies regarding green libraries. Only a few studies have been conducted by Pakistani scholars on green libraries, including a qualitative paper by Dr Pervaiz Ahmad, which suggests that libraries in Pakistan should take necessary steps to protect the environment.

He further articulated that there is no policy for green libraries, such as technologies for a paperless environment, biodegradable products, and recycling of waste disposals. Future studies regarding green libraries will further elaborate on the scope of 'go green' libraries. For this, the stakeholders and the Ministry of Climate Change should take the initiative to start awareness programme and educate both the staff and consumers. The Pakistan Library Association (PLA) and other provincial associations should organize awareness programme. Several economic steps can be taken by librarians at the university and college level, such as using solar panels instead of electricity, using laptops instead of desktop computers, reducing the use of paper for photocopying and printing inside the Library, planting trees inside the libraries, and reducing water usage in library washrooms. Some other necessary steps include using sensors to illuminate areas in the library only when they are in use, encouraging library users to opt for sustainable library collections such as e-books and e-journals, using scanners instead of printing documents, and, above all, utilizing the rooftops of libraries for planting small trees and vegetables to reduce heat inside the library.

Nexus of Artificial Intelligence and Libraries

Pakistan Today, May 14, 2023

There are speculations that conventional libraries will no longer run and go extinct if they do not diversify their activities from manual to intelligent technologies. Emerging technologies have made information professionals refer to libraries as intelligent libraries. The influx of emerging technology has compelled librarians and patrons to search for fast and easy access to information in their time of need.

This gave credence to the usefulness of Artificial Intelligence applications for library services. AI is defined as using computer algorithms that think, work and react like a human being. Different fields have already deployed AI for exponential growth; however, libraries worldwide have been experimenting with this technology for the last two decades to use it in the era of information and communication technologies. AI has been used in the advanced world to enhance staff job capacities, bridging the knowledge gap and meeting customer demands. Developing countries like Pakistan still need to decide whether to use it.

AI is the most productive technology for commercial and research applications and is becoming increasingly important. AI is used to predict customer behaviour, improve products, keep track of inventory, and analyze Big Data. There are several ways to include AI in library operations, especially in data analysis, making the library a centre for research activities using Big Data, supporting remote access to library services, and performing the routine tasks that now require a human being to reach advanced research with in-depth expertise. Libraries in advanced countries have entered the Fourth Industrial Revolution and are developing diverse technologies to empower the library with rich collections and modern services. Upon the arrival of AI in library operations, librarians now provide a growing array of digital services and resources. It is no longer news that AI will become part of library operations, but now we are living in the real world where the use of advanced technologies is considered. Now, we have arrived at a stage where what we hear in science fiction is becoming a reality.

The exceeded volume of books means that one can no longer purchase each title in this age of financial crunch. AI has made everything possible; now, patrons can access enormous resources instead of physically visiting the library. The widespread use of mobile phones has made it possible to access resources anywhere and anytime.

The COVID-19 pandemic accelerated the shift to remote access and digital platforms due to the advancement of AI. It has experimented that integrating AI into library operations and services will be a windfall for professionals working in different spheres. Most libraries use AI for complete technical services that require a massive team. The critical thing of AI in library operations is correct metadata for the available information. AI has replaced human work by putting extensive volumes of metadata in a few hours. In most libraries, AI is used to improve device performance, manage facial recognition, do an image search and provide virtual assistant services with the help of SIRI, Alexa

and Google Assistant. Chatbot features, Chat GPT, and GPS have become the need of the hour, and they are robust applications of AI in this present age of information technologies.

The Turnitin application is a common type of AI for similarity index and has been brought into use for the last few years in library operations. Other popular search engines like Ebscohost search discovery have been deployed in collective searches. Now, people can discover all their belongings in a single search engine. Other services, such as the Internet of Things, Big Data, Blockchain Technologies, and Virtual Reality, have been integrated into the libraries of advanced countries.

Some obstacles are associated with AI in library operations, like lack of finance, shortage of skilled labourers, insufficient power supply, slow speed of Internet, copyright and licence problems, unemployment, and so on; AI greatly influences library operations. Some other obstacles to AI are libraries, which need more information communication technologies and digital resilience.

Still, AI is believed to be a formidable and co-disciplinary approach to understanding. Librarians in Pakistan must ensure AI for fast and quality services and reach the patrons who need more time to visit the library physically. AI has already been implemented to support new forms of computational research, discovery, and engaging reuse of library collections. In other words, AI and libraries have a significant nexus to empower library operations with quality services. Dave Waters rightly said, "If people trust artificial intelligence (AI) to drive a car, people will most likely trust AI to do your job."

Libraries of the 21st Century

Pakistan Today, April 30, 2023

The writing materials and libraries have undergone various changes, from the bark leaves and clay tablets of the Stone Age to papyrus and parchments and the present papers. All writing materials were preserved in the libraries, which have a long and rich history dating back to ancient times. The function and role of libraries have evolved from time to time. Still, their Mission remains to serve the community through its valuable resources for access to knowledge and information. With the advent and rise of the digital age, libraries have adapted to incorporate new technologies and provide access to digital resources and physical materials. The physical contents are now transforming into digital objects; online databases, ebooks, and digital archives have become increasingly common in almost all libraries. The age of clay tablets is converting to e-tablets, and people's tastes are changing enormously.

Similarly, libraries are experiencing new tastes in the 21st-Century era. Initially, Project Gutenberg and now Google's Library projects have made an enormous amount of information available online. Now, libraries have not been confined to the four walls but have rushed to the potential customers, whether present or old alums. Libraries of today's age are democratizing access to knowledge despite the wealth of information available on the Internet. Libraries provide curated and authoritative sources of information and access to those resources that people may need help finding online. Libraries of modern eras serve as community hubs and provide spaces for people to gather, learn and connect. They offer various programs and services, from literacy programs to job search assistance and cultural events.

Today, libraries are excellent sources for education, research, and community engagement, and they adapt and evolve to meet the changing needs of society. Libraries are embracing the standard learning models and providing a flexible and supportive environment for learning and knowledge creation; such activities ensure that libraries remain an essential resource for education and lifelong learning in the digital age. Libraries in olden ages were repositories of information, but now they have become significant sources for exploration, discovery and creativity; these are places where learners from different spheres come together to share ideas, collaborate on projects and engage in a range of learning activities that extend beyond traditional classroom activities.

Libraries of the present era are no longer limited to the physical space within their walls. Modern libraries offer various services outside their walls, both online and in-person; some valuable services are online databases through Virtual Private Networks, and one can access ebooks, audiobooks, e-journals and other digital content; these services can be accessed from anywhere anytime with an internet connection. Some libraries of the 21st Century offer mobile library services that bring library materials to community centres, schools, and retirement homes. Libraries in developed countries provide community outreach programs to connect with underserved populations and promote literacy and education, such as storytimes, book clubs, author talks, etc. In the 21st century, all libraries can only fulfil the demands of potential customers with a limited budget; in this case, they have partnered with other organizations to offer services outside the library walls. Online programs are yet another

good initiative of modern libraries; many libraries provide online programs for remote users, such as virtual author talks, online book clubs and workshops via Zoom. These programs can be accessed from anywhere via the Internet.

Libraries in the 21st Century have adopted innovative technology to reach a wider audience and provide access to information in more efficient ways; for this, they have adopted emerging technologies like Online Public Access Catalogs (OPAC) because, in an earlier age, people used a card catalogue to find their desired information, now libraries have transformed their physical and electronic material via online catalogue where one can see the desired information in both physical and electronic formats. The libraries of the present age have made it easier for librarians to manage the circulation of material for users to borrow and return items; for this, they have designed an Automated Circulation System from which one can check in, check out, and renew library material in sophisticated ways. In modern libraries, many developed countries have adopted digital preservation technologies that preserve and make rare and fragile materials accessible. These technologies include digital imaging, digital conversion, digital storage and so on.

Some libraries in developed countries have adopted cutting-edge technologies to reach out to their potential customers; a few worth-mentioning technologies are Artificial Intelligence, cloud computing, Radio Frequency Identification (RFID), Virtual and Augmented Reality, Open Access, Digital Humanities, 3D Printing, mobile applications, Big Data and Internet of Things etc. These technologies offer vital services to potential customers and make them convenient with the latest information. In short, libraries of the present eras are finding new and innovative ways to fulfil and satisfy the needs of their present and retrospective patrons.

Research Standards of Pakistan

Pakistan Today, April 12, 2023

Pakistan's population is increasing enormously. As per the Bureau of Statistics January 2023 report, the population has risen to 238.1 million. The country faces various internal and external challenges like security, economic, political and social challenges and these challenges are associated with quality education. The country faces numerous other challenges, like tension from neighbouring countries, treatment of significant powers, and more.

The people of Pakistan are undoubtedly talented and still need more resources. This focuses only on the standard of research in Pakistan; for this, numerous worldwide databases were explored to find out the current situation of Pakistan in the realm of research. According to SCIMAGO Journal Rank (SJR), Pakistan's position is better than that of other developing countries. As per SJR, Pakistan ranks 45th among other countries. However, the question arises of whether India stands on seven, though both countries got independence on the same day.

It shows that since 1947, we needed help addressing educational standards to compete with our neighbouring countries. Secondly, according to the report of the Higher Education Commission of Pakistan (HEC), we have 247 recognized universities that offer degree programs, of which 147 are public, whereas 100 are private. This means these universities have been turned into factories producing MPhil and PhD degree holders with poor research. These scholars need to contribute to improving the quality of education and research to face social challenges.

According to the Times Higher Education Report, only 55 universities in Pakistan are listed in the world ranking university list. Among them, only three universities are listed between 400-600 ranking. Quaid-i-Azam University, despite a disastrous culture, held the first position because the ongoing situation, like the ethnic conflict between Baloch and Pathan, would make its ranking decline if the situation were not controlled. All the remaining universities were ranked between 600 and 1800, which is not a good omen for the education sector of Pakistan when we compare Pakistan with India in ranking sectors. There are 101 universities in India ranked between 200 and 1700 on the world list. The government should strictly deal with the violence in public sector universities like Peshawar University, Punjab University, Quaid-i-Azam University, and so on to avoid further decline in educational sectors; otherwise, such violence will further damage the education system in Pakistan.

The educational sector relies on legal and standard research; however, PhD Degree holders in Pakistan only produce quality research for degree requirements. There are vast platforms that offer many projects; however, researchers are based on government jobs instead of finding other projects provided by worldwide institutions. The Higher Education Commission still needs to devise parameters for PhD degree holders. Unfortunately, sixty-year terms and re-appointment after successful tenures in teaching faculty cause unemployment in education sectors.

However, most of the older community still needs to give the young generations chances and be more varied in the current research standards. Those older people even do not know how to open a computer

and take a print of their files. The Higher Education Commission should stop them from further tenure after reaching 60 years of age.

Other reasons for poor research in Pakistan include the need for more originality and that many scholars are reproducing the same work from existing studies without contributing to new research fields. Limited scope is another reason for poor quality research addressing important questions and issues in their respective fields. Another failure of quality research includes the inadequate research methodology, making it difficult for other researchers to reproduce the study's findings.

Lack of rigour fails to establish research standards like ethical considerations and data privacy. Above all, the lack of collaboration among researchers is another bottleneck that hinders Pakistan's research projects. Most seniors fully cooperate in encouraging their young colleagues to be recognized in their research field. All stakeholders like HEC, government, and institutions require concerted efforts to provide adequate resources and support the young generation.

Pakistan's research standard requires a multifaceted approach to make it more prominent in the world ranking; the only worthy step is the establishment of research-oriented institutions because, with these institutions, our country can grow in the right direction. There are heavy cuts in the budget for research and development programme. The government and higher education institutions should grant a handsome amount for research activities.

There needs to be more interdisciplinary research activities; most of the world's organizations are moving towards multidisciplinary research, but in Pakistan, only a few organizations are conducting research on multidisciplinary subjects; the institutions should encourage interdisciplinary research to promote collaboration among multiple disciplines.

The country faces unethical research practices; the stakeholders and research organizations should encourage ethical research practices to enhance their value. There needs to be more mentorship and counselling between students and faculty members. The institutions should encourage mentoring and counselling policies to meet the new challenges of the research realm. Enhancement of research collaboration is yet another issue; in this regard, cooperation from people-to-people and organization-to-organization should be established to contribute to the research arena. The country may emerge from hectic situations if we follow international norms in our research activities.

Open Access and Open Educational Resources

Pakistan Today February 16, 2023

The Internet has brought tremendous revolutions in our daily lives. Gone are the days when people spent most of their time in libraries. There has been a massive rise in open access to educational resources. A question, however, arises in most minds. What is Open Access? Open Access (OA) makes scholarly research and literature available online, allowing anyone to access and use it without barriers like paywalls. The goal is to increase access to knowledge and promote its dissemination and use for the public good. Open Access Resources (OER) in education refer to teaching, learning, and research materials that are freely available for anyone to use, modify, and distribute. This includes textbooks, videos, tests, and other educational materials that can be used in a classroom or for self-directed learning. OERs aim to make education more accessible and affordable by reducing the cost of materials for students and teachers.

In the educational scenario, Open Education Resources (OERs) have undergone various benefits; some of the benefits are given as under;

(1) Cost savings: OERs can significantly reduce the cost of educational materials for students and schools, making education more accessible and affordable.

(2) Improved educational quality: OERs can be updated and improved by anyone, leading to a more dynamic and up-to-date educational experience

(3) Flexibility: OERs can be adapted to the specific needs of a particular class or student, allowing for a more personalized learning experience

(4) Increased access to educational materials: OERs can be accessed by anyone with an internet connection, regardless of location or financial means, helping to reduce the digital divide and promoting equal access to education

(5) Collaboration: OERs encourage collaboration and sharing of educational materials, fostering a sense of community and promoting the exchange of ideas.

(6) Improved student outcomes: OERs have positively impacted student performance and engagement. In short, they have the potential to transform education and make it more accessible, flexible, and effective for everyone.

Numerous OERs are available on the Internet; some popular websites include as following;

A. **OpenStax:** A nonprofit organization that provides peer-reviewed, open-source textbooks for college and high school courses
B. **Project Gutenberg:** One of the oldest digital libraries, offering over 60,000 free eBooks.
C. **Khan Academy:** A nonprofit educational organization that provides free online courses and resources in various subjects.
D. **OpenSesame:** An online marketplace for buying and selling e-learning courses, with free classes available
E. **MERLOT:** A multi-disciplinary collection of online learning materials and resources, including course materials, multimedia, and assessments.
F. **MIT OpenCourseWare:** A free and open digital publication of high-quality educational materials from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.
G. **Open Education Consortium:** A global network of institutions and organizations committed to advancing open education and offering free educational resources and courses.
H. **OER Commons:** A digital library and network for educators, students, and researchers to find and share open educational resources
I. **PDF Drive:** An online free library that offers millions of books and articles. These are just a few examples of the many sources of OERs available online. Using OERs, educators and students can access high-quality educational materials at no cost. In Pakistan, most people rely on open educational resources (OERs) because they need more time to visit libraries. Several websites promote educational resources free of cost for the students; some popular websites are given below:

- **Digital Study Hall (DSH):** A nonprofit organization that provides free, web-based learning resources for students in rural areas of Pakistan.
- **Punjab OER Initiative:** The Punjab government has launched an initiative to promote the use of OERs in schools and colleges throughout the province.
- **HEC Digital Library:** The Higher Education Commission (HEC) of Pakistan has established a digital library with a collection of OERs and other educational resources.
- **Free Textbook Project:** The Lahore University of Management Sciences (LUMS) project aimed at providing accessible, high-quality textbooks for college students in Pakistan.
- **Sindh OER Initiative:** This initiative, similar to the Punjab OER Initiative, aims to promote the use of OERs in schools and colleges in the Sindh province. These initiatives are helping to promote the use of OERs in Pakistan and improve students' access to education. By reducing the cost of materials and improving the quality of resources, OERs can play a crucial role in advancing education in Pakistan.

Though Open Educational Resources (OERs) have their benefits like time-saving, being free of cost, flexibility in content, and improved student outcomes, some negative aspects associated with OERs are given below:

A. **Quality control:** Since anyone can contribute to or modify OERs, the quality of the materials can vary greatly. This may lead to unreliable or inaccurate information being shared.
B. **Funding:** The development and maintenance of OERs rely on donations and volunteer contributions, which can lead to a lack of resources and funding for ongoing support and improvement.

C. **Limited resources:** While OERs are widely available, the range of materials may not be as extensive as those in commercial sources. This can limit the options available to educators and students.
D. **Intellectual property issues:** OERs are often licensed under Creative Commons or other open licenses, which can raise questions about copyright and intellectual property.
E. **Technical skills:** Using OERs may require specific technical skills, such as accessing and navigating digital materials, which can be a barrier for some users.

In summary, OERs have the potential to improve access to education significantly, but there are also challenges to be aware of and overcome. Careful evaluation and selection of OERs, along with proper training and support for users, can help mitigate these challenges and ensure the successful use of OERs in education.

Role of Libraries in Academic Resources of Higher Education Institutions

The Diplomatic Insight, February 13, 2023

Academic resources play a crucial role in higher education Institutions & refer to all those materials and services that support the learning activities of students studying higher education institutions. It includes tutoring and academic support, technology resources like computer software, online tools for learning and research, health and wellness services, students' organizations, financial aids, scholarships, mentoring and counselling services, but the role of libraries in the physical or online collection of books, journals, databases, and other resources for research and study plays a tremendous role in the performance of students.

These resources are designed to help students achieve their academic goals and succeed professionally and personally. Libraries are the brains of society and true guarantors of knowledge seeking. It preserves human records in written texts, audio, video, and other formats that fulfil the user's needs. The primary purpose of libraries is to provide students with access to information, resources, and support their learning and research activities. Some key roles of libraries include collection development, as the main objective of any library is to acquire, organize, and provide access to a wide range of information resources like books, journals, databases, and online resources to achieve students' academic goals. Libraries provide access to the vast collections of preserved records and train the users through information literacy instruction programmes. It abreast users with recorded information and encourages them to find the correct information at the right time. It teaches them the proper research skills and the use of library resources.

Libraries also support the students in their study and research support activities. It provides spaces for individual or group study and resources for specialized databases and research material. It also offers technical support to students, such as computers, printers, and multimedia equipment, and it allows students to use technology and software for their research practices. Libraries are attractive places for community buildings to serve as a hub for student activity and provide opportunities to collaborate and engage in learning beyond the classroom. In short, libraries are places for community buildings, networking, and socialization. The library also provides opportunities for tutoring, workshops, and access to specialized collections resources.

In other words, the library is a vital component of the academic resources in higher education institutions and plays a critical role in supporting students' success. Libraries offer various services like books, journals, and online student resources. It also provides computer labs, multimedia centres, access to high-speed Internet, and discussion places where people discuss issues of their relevant subjects. Many universities offer free tutoring, academic support, writing centres, peer mentoring, and counselling services. It also directs career services that provide job search assistance, resume-building workshops, and networking opportunities. Academic resources in Higher Education institutions are highly significant in students' success as they support learning, research, and personal development. Some critical reasons for educational resources in libraries are mentioned below;

- Enhancing student learning: Academic resources such as tutoring, writing centres, and technology resources provide students with the support they need to succeed academically and develop the skills they need to succeed in their careers.
- Improving student outcomes: Research has shown that students who use academic resources, such as libraries and tutoring services, have higher grades, better attendance, and are more likely to persist and graduate.
- Supporting student research: Libraries and other academic resources provide students with the information and resources they need to complete research projects and engage in independent study.
- Promoting student success: Career services, health and wellness services, and financial aid resources help students navigate the practical and personal challenges that can impact their success in college and beyond.
- Building community: Student organizations, clubs, events, and programs offered by academic resources bring students together to build relationships and create a supportive community that enhances the college experience.

The availability of high-quality academic resources is crucial for student success in higher education institutions. These resources provide students with the support they need to achieve their educational goals, grow as individuals, and prepare for successful careers. Dr. S.R. Ranganathan, a library scientist, has rightly said that "Libraries are not mere storehouses; they are rich springs from which knowledge flows out to irrigate the side field of education and culture."

In short, the library is a vital component of the academic resources in higher education institutions and plays a critical role in supporting student success. Its availability and accessibility are essential for students to gain the information, skills, and support they need to achieve their academic and personal goals.

Unleashing the Power of Open Access: Revolutionizing Education with OERs

The Diplomatic Insight, February 6, 2023

The Internet has brought tremendous revolutions in our daily lives. Gone are the days when people spent most of their time in libraries. There has been a massive rise in open access to educational resources. A question, however, arises in minds: What is Open Access? Open Access (OA) makes scholarly research and literature available online, allowing anyone to access and use it without barriers like paywalls. The goal is to increase access to knowledge and promote its dissemination and use for the public good. Open Access Resources (OER) in education refer to teaching, learning, and research materials that are freely available for anyone to use, modify, and distribute. This includes textbooks, videos, tests, and other educational materials that can be used in a classroom or for self-directed learning. OERs aim to make education more accessible and affordable by reducing the cost of materials for students and teachers. In the educational scenario, Open Education Resources (OERs) have undergone various benefits; some are listed below.

(1) Cost savings: OERs can significantly reduce the cost of educational materials for students and schools, making education more accessible and affordable. (2) Improved educational quality: OERs can be updated and improved by anyone, leading to a more dynamic and up-to-date educational experience. (3) Flexibility: OERs can be adapted to the specific needs of a particular class or student, allowing for a more personalized learning experience. (4) Increased access to educational materials: OERs can be accessed by anyone with an internet connection, regardless of location or financial means, helping to reduce the digital divide and promoting equal access to education. (5) Collaboration: OERs encourage collaboration and sharing of educational materials, fostering a sense of community and promoting the exchange of ideas. (6) Improved student outcomes: OERs have positively impacted student performance and engagement. In short, we may say that OERs have the potential to transform education and make it more accessible, flexible, and effective for everyone. Numerous OERs are available on the Internet; some popular websites include:

(1) OpenStax: A nonprofit organization that provides peer-reviewed, open-source textbooks for college and high school courses. Also read US-UK Comprehensive Dialogue on Technology and Data (2) Project Gutenberg: One of the oldest digital libr aries, offering over 60,000 free e-Books. (3) Khan Academy: A nonprofit educational organization that provides free online courses and resources in various subjects. (4) OpenSesame: An online marketplace for buying and selling e-learning courses, with free courses available (5) MERLOT: A multi-disciplinary collection of online learning materials and resources, including course materials, multimedia, and assessments. (6) MIT Open Course Ware: A free and open digital publication of high-quality educational materials from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. (7) Open Education Consortium: A global network of institutions and organizations committed to advancing open education and offering free educational resources and courses. (8) OER Commons: A digital library and network for educators, students, and researchers to find and share open educational resources (9) PDF Drive: An online free library that offers millions of books and articles. These are just a few examples of the many sources of OERs available online. Using OERs, educators and students can access high-quality educational materials

at no cost. In Pakistan, most people rely on open educational resources (OERs) because they need more time to visit libraries. Several websites promote educational resources free of cost for the students; some popular websites are given below:

(1) Digital Study Hall (DSH): A nonprofit organization that provides free, web-based learning resources for students in rural areas of Pakistan. (2) Punjab OER Initiative: An initiative of the Government of Punjab aimed at promoting the use of OERs in schools and colleges throughout the province. (3) HEC Digital Library: The Higher Education Commission (HEC) of Pakistan has established a digital library with a collection of OERs and other educational resources (4) Free Textbook Project: The Lahore University of Management Sciences (LUMS) project aimed at providing accessible, high-quality textbooks for college students in Pakistan (5) Sindh OER Initiative: A similar initiative to the Punjab OER Initiative aimed at promoting the use of OERs in schools and colleges in the Sindh province. These initiatives are helping to promote the use of OERs in Pakistan and improve students' access to education. By reducing the cost of materials and improving the quality of resources, OERs can play a crucial role in advancing education in Pakistan. Though Open Educational Resources (OERs) have their benefits like time-saving, free of cost, flexibility in content, and improved student outcomes, some negative aspects associated with OERs are given below:

(1) Quality control: Since anyone can contribute to or modify OERs, the quality of the materials can vary greatly. This may lead to unreliable or inaccurate information being shared. (2) Funding: The development and maintenance of OERs rely on donations and volunteer contributions, which can lead to a lack of resources and funding for ongoing support and improvement. (3) Limited resources: While OERs are widely available, the range of materials may not be as extensive as those in commercial sources. This can limit the options available to educators and students. (4) Intellectual property issues: OERs are often licensed under Creative Commons or other open licenses, which can raise questions about copyright and intellectual property. (5) Technical skills: Using OERs may require specific technical skills, such as accessing and navigating digital materials, which can be a barrier for some users. In a nutshell, OERs have the potential to improve access to education significantly, but there are also challenges to be aware of and overcome. Careful evaluation and selection of OERs, along with proper training and support for users, can help to mitigate these challenges and ensure the successful use of OERs in education.

Artificial Intelligence (AI) Applications in Education

Pakistan Observer, January 25, 2023

According to the Oxford Language Dictionary, "Artificial Intelligence (AI) is the theory and development of computer systems able to perform tasks normally requiring human intelligence, such as visual perception, speech recognition, decision-making, and translation between languages." AI has become one of the hottest buzzwords of our age, transforming human services into machine services with technology and good reason. Several advancements and innovations have occurred in science fiction in recent years. Now, humans feel themselves in real life after the invention of AI. John McCarthy coined the term Artificial Intelligence in a conference held in 1956.The term AI got accelerated speed when Shakey (A general purpose mobile robot) was launched in 1969 for general instruction. When a supercomputer, "Deep Blue," was introduced by IBM in 1997, it was regarded as a massive milestone of AI. AI operation in practice started in 2002 when the first robotic vacuum cleaner was introduced.

From 2005 onward, the technologist never looked back and presented different applications like Speech Recognition Systems, Dancing Robots, Smart Homes, and Robotic Process Automation (RPA). Artificial Intelligence has been divided into four types: purely reactive, theory of mind, limited memory and self-aware. Purely reactive machines give the possible result without observing data and memory like a chess game. The theory of mind is used to understand thoughts and emotions; this kind of AI interacts like a social human. Limited memory is the kind of AI that preserves data and adds more information for proper decision-making with minimal memory. Self-aware AI is the latest technology for future generations, and it is intelligent, aware, and conscious with understanding.

Statistica report has explained that by 2025, the AI Application software market worldwide will reach 126 billion dollars. The Gartner report has recorded that 37% of organizations have deployed AI applications, which has grown to 270% in the last four years. Servion Global Solutions has articulated that by 2025, 95% of customer interactions will be powered by AI. As AI applications have been implemented in different domains, similarly, the Education sector is one of the largest and most influential fields for all humanities in general and particularly for digital savvy.AI has slowly begun to seep its roots in education, and this slow transition increases the productivity among both teaching faculties and students. Some of the major applications of AI are Administrative Tasks Automated to Aid Educators, like facilitating and automating personalized messages to students, grading paperwork, routine issue feedback, course and HR-related tasks, arranging and encouraging parent and guardian interaction, etc.

AI can help create innovative content such as video lecturing, animation, and learning content through customization for different grades. It can also be utilized in textbook guides, conferences, invitations, etc. AI has been declared one of the most productive applications for generating audio and video summaries of integral lesson plans. Voice Assistants is yet another state-of-the-art application of AI

that answers common questions raised by students without the involvement of the lecturer and teacher. Hyper-personalization techniques are yet another application of AI to monitor lesson plans, study guides, habits and flash notes of the students; this technology is highly commendable for educational institutions. Another transparent AI technology is the navigation application, which offers educational institutions timely, accurate, and detailed information.

This technology uses GPS, a Convolutional Neural Network, and a Graph Neural Network to detect users' activities; it tells you the number of lanes and shows road obstructions. This application has been utilized by logistics companies that tell them about road traffic and the optimization of routes; Uber and Careem services are the best examples of AI. Social Media has become a significant segment of our people; we need it to interact efficiently and effectively. Top social networking websites like Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, and so on utilize Artificial Intelligence. These applications use AI to help educational institutions improve and market their services. Facebook uses a deep text application, enabling you to understand conversations better; it can automatically translate them into different languages. Modern educational institutions display their Twitter activities using AI services to remove propaganda and hateful content. This is an excellent source for engaging your community members to share their thoughts openly. Lastly, educational institutions can use Chatbots, which use AI applications. This technology comprehends the natural language to respond to people online via live chat, one of the best applications for students and faculty members. Modern websites combine Chatbots for live questioning and answering. It provides solutions to any query 24/7, the most remarkable application of AI. In a nutshell, AI and education have a strong bond with an imaginary world.

Research of Pakistan under SCImago Journal Rank | By Abid Hussain

Pakistan Observer, December 24, 2022

SCImago Journal & Country Rank is an online portal that can be accessed online. It includes journals and scientific indicators developed from the information of Scopus (the world's largest indexing agency). These indicators are used to analyze the published records in the scientific realm. This platform compares journal productivity from subject to subject and country to country. Citation data has been drawn from 34,100 titles, over 5000 publishers and 239 countries worldwide. It is an excellent source for journal metrics, and its name is taken from SCImago Journal Rank (SJR), a widely known algorithm by Google Page-rank. SCImago is a research group at the University of Granada (Madrid) that provides information analysis using visualization techniques. It has changed the shape of science and the Atlas of Science. In other words, the shape of science is an information visualization that aims to reveal the structure of science.

On the contrary, the Atlas of Science project proposes creating an information system to show a graphic representation of Ibero-American Science Research that provides navigation through semantic spaces formed by the maps. Pakistan Stands with serial 45 among all countries, with approximately 244476 documents and 2798976 citations, with an average of 11.45 per citation. The High index publications are 353, which is a good omen; however, when comparing our country with India and Iran, the neighbouring countries of Pakistan. India stands in 7th position ranking with 2353482 documents and 26332969 citations. The position of Iran in the ranking list is 21st, with a total of 733080 documents and 8788390 citations. However, the question arises as to whether Pakistan needs to improve its research contribution.

The answer is no. Pakistan is a country with 225.2 million (2021); nevertheless, the population of India is 1.393 billion (2021). Iran's population is estimated at 85.03 million (2021). In the research scenario, Pakistan's position is slightly better than that of other South Asian countries. As we know, South Asia is a region of eight countries – Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka. Among them, Pakistan stands second after India. What is the way forward for Pakistan regarding research contribution in SCImago and similar indexing agencies? A country with talented brains can grow if 60% of the youth bulge is engaged in research. The government should educate these youngsters in the right direction; otherwise, we could spoil them. According to the website report of the Higher Education Commission of Pakistan, there are 244 public and private sector universities. Most offer higher degrees in Natural Sciences, Engineering and Technology, Medical and Health Sciences, Agricultural Sciences, Social Sciences and humanities.

These disciplines produce quality research to earn the degrees; stakeholders should bind them to extract scientific publications from theses. However, Higher Education Pakistan has made a mandatory step, limited to PhD level programmes. The second aspect of promoting research is Pakistan's education standard, which needs to catch up to international standards. Old and outdated curricula at the university level still need to be distasteful in quality research. It is the moral duty of HEC to reinvigorate curricula with research-oriented tasks. There should be a regulatory authority to oversee the quality of research in government and private sectors. The ill-equipped tools like Project

Management Tools, Grammar Checker Tools, reference management tools, Plagiarism Checkers, social networking for academics, journal finders and above all, the old items in laboratories and libraries are a few impediments to quality research.

The latest equipment and information are crucial for advanced research. Lack of funding for research and development is yet another bottleneck, especially for PhD Programmes. The Higher Education Commission of Pakistan should grant allowances for scholarly productions. Research culture in Pakistan is declining for many reasons. One of them needs counselling and mentoring of our youth. Those who come from abroad with higher degrees should train our youth. Most of our foreign-qualified staff endeavour to do so; nevertheless, the sub-standard government policy, poor infrastructure, and low budget for research and development are a few impediments that need to be addressed. Research is an exhaustive endeavour requiring time, high skills, and quality tools. The success of Pakistan depends on the quality and scientific research to make a better place in Scimago and similar indexing agencies; the government should take one step ahead. Philip George Zimbardo, an American psychologist and a professor emeritus at Stanford University, rightly said, "Academic success depends on research and publications".

Internet and Reading Habits

Pakistan Observer, April 12, 2021

Reading is a springboard for any literacy programme. It is one of the oldest habits of human civilization, particularly among extraordinary personalities. It is an excellent source of conscious learning and is regarded as the art of interpreting printed and written words. Reading helps with the accuracy of information, attitude, judgement, belief, and morals. Many people believe there has been a severe decline in reading habits since the invention of the Internet; however, most think that the Internet has increased reading habits and not diminished them. In the past, libraries were an excellent source for fact findings and information acquisition; now, reading culture is declining, and people need more time to visit libraries physically. Libraries were known as places of creative thinking, information, and research activities in the past. The advancement of new technologies and the World Wide Web has brought drastic changes in almost all aspects of life, such as industry, trading and educational sectors. Due to these advanced technologies, people live in the digital world, which has inundated the teaching and learning process

with digital tools. Undoubtedly, the Internet is a wealth and a fast source of information. However, searching for information on the Internet diverts people's attention from one place to another, and they need clarification on what to select and what to reject. Scholars believe that the Internet is a veritable tool for learning, teaching, and research activities; however, it is also a source of entertainment and gaming for teenagers. Surprisingly, technology is taking steady control over human lives. On one side, it is a source of fascinating learning; on the other, it damages our brains and gradually affects our eyesight. The funky handsets in students' hands have confused the young brains. Most students play games, chat with friends, and watch movies. They do not have time to open a book to read. Social media like Facebook, Instagram, WhatsApp, Twitter, LinkedIn, etc., have intoxicated our youngsters; now, more people are engaged with these tools and do not have time to read a book. In the old times, printed materials like newspapers, books, and magazines were great sources of reading and learning. Nevertheless, Ubiquitous technology like the Internet has enormous impacts on our reading habits.

It is astounding that the Internet has created a global and virtual world, and people from different spheres have been interlinked with this robust technology. More activities in the physical world, such as business, research, education, etc., have been moved online. Similarly, it has become an excellent forum for online readings. However, the value of physical books and printed material can never be replaced with electronic gadgets. Although the Internet is known as an extensive encyclopedia, a library without walls cannot replace physical libraries. Some have the view that the Internet has brought a tremendous revolution in the reading habits of the current generation; still, the aches and pains obtained by the Internet are more in numbers; in my view, the Internet is a time-waster tool and causes distraction in study; it affects focus and patience, it brought health issues and obesity. It has caused depression, loneliness and social isolation. It brought Viruses and Malware practices. It is not a safe place for children and teenagers; it is a hub of bullying, trolls, stalkers, and crimes. These are

a few worsening damages influenced by the Internet. In short, reading from physical books is far better than reading on the Internet. John Landgraf rightly said, "Information technology and the Internet are rapidly transforming almost every aspect of our lives – some for better, some for worse. ” In short, reading and the Internet are two equalizers of life. Nonetheless, the value of physical reading can never be misconstrued.

YouTube: A Source of knowledge and Ultimate Ideas

Pakistan Today, November 20, 2022

YouTube is the second largest social media platform after Facebook. It was invented in 2005 and purchased by Google in 2006. It is a video-sharing search engine available in nearly a hundred countries. People across the globe upload videos of their choices and attract viewers of their interests. Since its invention, it has become the second-largest search engine after Google. It offers movies, songs, news, comedy, science and technology, and educational material that engages people of all ages. According to Statistics 2022, more than 206 billion people worldwide use YouTube once a month. The report also stated that people watch this channel for billions of hours and generate billions of dollars. YouTube has also been claimed to have generated $19.7 billion in revenue in the current year (2022). As per the Statista report, most YouTube users are in the age group of 15-35, and the majority are from India, which is estimated at 467 million, followed by the USA. It has been proclaimed that the most YouTube traffic comes from the USA, with 16.4 per cent, followed by India, with 9.9 per cent, and then Japan, with 4.8 per cent. More than 70 per cent of people watch YouTube from their mobile devices. The male and female ratio of YouTube is 11:9. In a report, it has also been recorded that 54 per cent of them are male and 46 per cent female. The most watched channels on YouTube belong to comedy, with 77 per cent of users. The report has also stated that every visitor checks nine pages on average once he/she steps into YouTube. As per the Statista report of 2022, YouTube has more than 5.1 million active channels which offer different programmes. It is astounding that YouTube has more than 100 local versions in over 80 languages.

In this age of digital transformation, YouTube earned enormous fame exclusively during the pandemic when education converted from classrooms to online mode. People now prefer clever learning techniques rather than visiting institutions personally. YouTube opened up a new horizon in education. Massive Open Online Courses (MOOC), Edx, Udacity, and others have converted online courses that can be accessed via YouTube. The Massachusetts Institute of Technology and Stanford have already converted their courses online, which can be accessed via YouTube. It has a wide variety of content, from entertainment to education. Many experts have launched channels that offer online lectures and tutorials. YouTube is a source of income for technical, vocational and skills education. Now, people in different disciplines prepare online courses and upload them to their channels, attracting millions of users. The world has become a global village; whatever happens in other corners, you will find them on YouTube. It is an excellent source of information. MIT and Harvard Universities have become active parts of edX for online lectures available to students of all ages.

YouTube has a significant impact on the education and learning experience of the students. Someone has rightly said that you never get bored with YouTube. Students of different disciplines should positively make use of it.

Free education is a need for every individual, and YouTube plays a tremendous role in free education. Some informative search engines that offer comprehensive courses via YouTube are Canvas

Network, Coursera, Cognitive Class, in University, Future Learn, Khan Academy, Kadenze, Udemy Udacity, etc. These courses offer online learning, counselling, diplomas and degrees. In the last few years, audio-visual material has made teaching methods effective, and the present generation is taking a keen interest in intelligent learning. YouTube is, undoubtedly, a place of innovative education. To make it more effective, students should engage in quality courses that enhance their educational and career growth. YouTube is a source of entertainment, information, and current awareness, and it is an educational platform. It depends on human minds what they should select. Though it has some negative aspects, like watching movies, dramas, and sports, using it for educational purposes will make us competitive in different spheres. Most courses charge a heavy amount. However, YouTube is a free institution that offers extensive courses without spending a penny. Mere readings from textbooks and remembering them are not a good idea. YouTube makes you a critical thinker and teacher in your subject. YouTube harnesses education and classroom teaching. It helps your educational skills, shows which courses are fruitful for our students, and makes them creative and active learners.

YouTube has a significant impact on the education and learning experience of the students. Someone has rightly said that you never get bored with YouTube. Students of different disciplines should positively make use of it. Susan Wojcicki, the CEO of YouTube, has expressed on her YouTube website that "we hope to support those who use YouTube to share their knowledge with the world and the millions of the users who come to our platform to learn".

Lacking Research Culture in Pakistan

Pakistan Observer, November 4, 2022

It is a phenomenon that the socioeconomic progress of any nation can be achieved through innovative applications and the commercialization of research. The Allah Almighty has bestowed enormous talents on the Pakistani youth. However, our youth need direction. They seek assistance at every stage, which is terrible for their health. Students at the university level still need to be mentored and appropriately counselled to learn new skills. Research culture in Pakistan is lacking for many reasons. The most significant barrier in research is the English Language. Our youth bulge should be spending more time in curricula. Most of them are intoxicated by social media like Facebook, Twitter, WhatsApp, YouTube, etc. Some are fond of sports, and fewer are taking a research interest, but they need counselling to grow and achieve what they want. Pakistan has enormous natural resources and advanced capabilities in the public and private sectors; association with strong research bodies and funding institutes still needs to grow in the research discipline. Government institutions have never emphasized comprehensively improving the standards of research culture in Pakistan. Research starts at graduation or post-graduation level; moreover, our students need help in research work at this stage. It is said that the youth are crazy about what they desire, but unfortunately, our youths desire to gain more things by using shortcuts.

Nobody is interested in quality research; only for the sake of a degree programme do they look for a shortcut to attain their degree. Our MPhil and PhD scholars produce nothing except their thesis on locked shelves. In Pakistan, most students need to learn critical thinking and analysis. Although students read at a higher level of education, in return, they produce nothing. Students at the graduation level should develop their own opinions and argument-based research. The education standard of Pakistan needs to catch up to the international norm; stakeholders at the higher education level do their best to devise a mechanism to empower the youth; however, education mafias and institutions are a significant hurdle to implementing such a mechanism. Old age researchers always keep the youth from being entrusted with the latest technology because it significantly threatens their livelihood. The research centres in the private and public sectors are Ill-equipped. As a result, they produce low-quality research. Lack of funding for quality research is yet another bottleneck, especially for PhD research programmes. Those who have done research need to implement it fully. Our research institutions and universities produce research but are limited to libraries on locked shelves. Even our project stakeholders have never asked for background research produced at the university level. Higher Education Commission created a research repository at the PhD level in the last few years, but the progress still needs to be made faster. HEC should bind these universities to upload their theses on a priority basis. Most students at BS and Master levels do not accept research projects, and they opt for extra courses; how can we improve this sort of culture? Their teachers avoid those who take a research interest not to opt. Research is not rocket science; it is a technique to be learned. Both teachers and students are responsible for a low research culture. Many students are disheartened by their teachers that doing research is challenging. A few suggestions are mentioned to improve research culture in Pakistan: Improvement in education quality is needed to address the deteriorating research culture in Pakistan. Most MPhil and PhD scholars teach in different

organizations; they should direct their students to quality research. Counselling and mentoring students are the need of the hour to make them notable researchers. It is said that excellence comes with motivation. Critical thinking in Pakistan has no room in the educational space, so new ideas are not encouraged. Experimental labs and libraries should be improved. Reputed journals should be launched at each research centre to empower our youths with modern research. Research training institutes should be set up in the country. These are dire needs for achieving research excellence in Pakistan.

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa: Lacking School Libraries

International Association of School Librarianship (IASL)October 2022

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa is known as the land of hospitality, with a robust culture and mesmerizing landscape. It has a great history with legendary conquerors and is famous for tourism in Pakistan. The province is located in the Northwestern region of Pakistan. As per the census report of Pakistan 2017, KP province comprises 11.9% of Pakistan's total population; in other words, the total population of this province is 35 million, including 52% males and 48% females. The total area of this province is 101,741 km². This is the third literate province of Pakistan, with a 53% literacy rate. The youth of KP province are complemented by enormous talent and have proved themselves with extensive visions and innovative ideas. The youth of this province left no stone unturned to envision it as one of the vital provinces among other regions of Pakistan.

The government of this province is trying to unleash their potential by providing employability skills that meet the current scenario of world-class education. The youth of this province has vast potential to empower this nation with vital skills and modern education. As per KP's annual school census report, there are 27638 government schools in settled districts of KP, of which 27524 are functional while 114 are non-functional. In primary education, there are 22006 schools; out of them, 21896 are operational, while 110 are non-functional. Among these institutions, 761 are Mosque/Maktab schools (a Mosque/Maktab school is a school in worship places. The government is funding these schools to empower our children with model education. It has been noticed that apart from Mosques, a total of 233 schools deliver education in the province's communities. The report indicates that in total 22006 primary schools, 1309 schools were built in urban areas while 20697 schools were made in rural areas. At the secondary level of education, there are 5632 schools; of them, 5628 are functional, while four are non-functional. For the complete statistics of these schools, please view the table below.

Number of Institutions of All Types

Sector	Boys	Girls	Co-Education	Total	Percentage
Government	16,701 60%	10,937 40%	0	27,638	67%
Private (Registered)	449 5%	283 3%	8,251 89%	8,983	22%
Deeni Madaris	3,795 81%	885 19%	0	4,680	11%
Total	20,945 51%	12,105 29%	8,251 20%	41,301	100%

Source: Annual School Census Report of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa 2020-21

It is astounding to know that most schools in this province lack basic needs like clean water, bathroom facilities, laboratories, libraries, etc. It has also been noticed that most schools in rural areas need more teachers. It is heartfelt news that page 16 of the Annual School Census report of the settled district in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa 2020-21 indicates that there are only 130 librarians in a total of

155838 teaching staff. There are only a few libraries in these schools. Libraries are a central and integral part of schools' teaching and learning process. Undoubtedly, schools without libraries may never grow in the right direction. Many schools do not have proper classrooms, and very few have libraries; however, senior teachers converted them into offices or classrooms. Though the KP Government is enduring the building and infrastructure of these schools and libraries, they still need to grant a proper budget, which is a question mark. Government should take a keen interest in library development to promote reading habits. Lacking school libraries in this province may deprive our youngsters of quality education.

Librarian's Role in Massive Open Online Course (MOOC)

The Global Village Space. October 5, 2022

Massive Open Online Course (MOOC) was taken by the University of Manitoba in 2008, though the courses were not made available until 2011; however, the initiative became widely known outside a few North American institutions. In the autumn of 2011, Stanford University organized an event about the uses of MOOCs. Since that event, MOOC has never looked back, and it has attracted millions of users from almost all countries. Two well-known professors at Stanford University initially started an online lecture on Artificial Intelligence, which attracted 160,000 students from 190 countries. These lectures compelled American nationalists toward online learning and led to rash MOOCs. The Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) joined Udacity and Coursera in December 2011. By the end of 2012, MIT became an active part of edX along with Harvard, and they both initiated online lectures, which brought a radical change similar to most MOOCs.

Initially, MOOCs had been characterized by connectivity, chaos, open-endedness, and, above all, student-driven; all courses were released under an open license and it was allowed that their contents could be remixed and reused, but the new startups of MOOCs were quite different; the new lectures are firmly embedded in educational mainstream, these lectures are mainly based on instructive pedagogical methods, and significantly fewer opportunities are granted for remix and reuse. Udacity offers its course under a Creative Commons License; however, it strictly forbids remixing and reusing its contents. Udacity and edX have brought a tremendous revolution in online education and have encouraged educators in other countries to undertake similar projects. In developing countries like Pakistan, the situation is different. Although some distance educational institutions like Allama Iqbal Open University and Virtual University in Pakistan practice the same, only registered members can access these materials. They avoid uploading it publicly because it will harm their degree programmes and enrollment in future. Other issues, such as copyright and licensing of visual materials, could have improved their ability to be shown online. Read More: Qatar's National Library (QNL): Free digital service to get people to read more. Librarians, whether in academic libraries or the public sphere, are abreast their users with the latest developments. Many librarians worldwide linked MOOC lectures with their websites to attract end users. In Pakistan, few librarians know about these services and have connected them with their websites; however, most still need online websites. If few have online libraries, they are commercially designed, like Virtua, Insignia, etc. Many libraries in Pakistan even need proper budgets for IT tools like computer hardware and software. The low budget for books does not allow librarians to spend more on IT development. Few libraries have adopted open-access software like KOHA, DSpace, e-prints, and Greenstone, but these require considerable customization for web services.

Pessimism regarding the librarian's role in MOOCs is not entirely groundless. Many librarians must be aware of embedding these technologies in their websites, even in developed countries like the USA, UK, Germany, etc. As Udacity MOOCs deliver free lectures, these services should be adopted on the library website to capture the audience's interest. Udacity MOOCs are designed to be entirely

self-contained and should be shown. Other MOOCs have inflexible terms and conditions and confuse customers about where to move. For the most part, librarians can expect to take on a similar role to those they have in traditional courses. The perception of librarians regarding MOOCs is divided into two categories; one group believes that the bleakest outlook for academic libraries adopting MOOCs is not the job of librarians, but IT experts and others hold the view that MOOCs can attract most of our users. They can be engaged in the library affairs.

Librarians do not have much role in some MOOC lectures for many reasons like lack of IT skills and less knowledge in software development; however, realistically, it would help their patrons to use library services; they should link Udacity, edX, Coursera, etc., with library websites. Librarians face some issues by embedding these services with library websites; these are copyright clearances, helping to ensure that content uploaded MOOC will be accessible to all users, including those using assistive technologies, content licensing, providing instructions in information literacy and encouraging open licensing. MOOC is a good initiative for distance learners, and libraries should be used wisely.

Traditional vs Digital Libraries

Pakistan Observer, September 19, 2022

In the last 50 years, libraries have been considered to be the collection of books, manuscripts, journals, and similar items. In those eras, Libraries have increasingly developed to provide information resources and services to patrons in times of need. The terms Digital Library and Virtual Library refer to the vast collection of information people gain access to remotely. Societies evolved from time to time, but the value of information still existed. The current society values information more and more; for this purpose, the role of the information industry has also evolved its services, which encompass services to publishers, software developers, online information services, and other businesses selling information. After the advent of advanced technology, libraries have adopted a new mode of digital technology. Moving towards digital applications, these libraries have left behind many challenges, such as management issues and impact on user satisfaction.

Now, each library is in the process of paradigm shifts. It is a matter of fact that managing old traditional libraries is now a problematic job for librarians due to fewer resources and time, which is a crucial factor. Digital libraries have become a need of the time; however, there are still many problems, like software failure, hackers, and high budgets for electronic gadgets. Library management converts traditional libraries into digital ones for users' tastes. As technologies evolve rapidly, similarly, it hampered the services of library management and stakeholders to buy advanced technologies.

Librarians today have expressed that we do not rely on digital or traditional libraries; we believe that only hybrid libraries are of great importance. Therefore, there should be a hybrid library mode that fulfils the needs of current and prospective patrons because people of old age avoid computer information technologies. On the other hand, people of the present generation rely more on electronic formats.

People use both sorts of services in developed and developing countries. Many people have believed that converting from traditional to digital mode is not beneficial, as this will completely destroy the usefulness of physical libraries. On the other hand, Digital Libraries create unemployment, requiring few persons to maintain them. This will harm not only the book business but also the existence of ancient knowledge housed in libraries.

Though in some parts, the old manuscripts are converted from papers to digital modes, countries like Pakistan, with poor IT and infrastructure and less budget, cannot afford to convert all its physical books into digital applications for so many reasons, one of them is copyright issues, the second reason is the devaluation of physical books and third people relies on book businesses. Patrons are more satisfied with both facilities, i.e., traditional and digital formats. Library management believes running conventional and digital libraries under one roof is easy and manageable. Moving from traditional libraries to modern information networking has provided both opportunities and challenges to libraries. The Digital Library has become the need of the hour to provide quick services to those who need more time to go to the library. Even though users of today's era have the same feelings as

in the past, they still locate the correct and exact information they want. In a Traditional Library, people used to come to the library and search for the desired material through old catalogue cards, which was a time-consuming task. Now, libraries on larger scales have adopted both traditional and digital services. The card catalogue era has come to an end. Libraries of the current time have converted their old catalogue into electronic computer catalogues called Online Public Access Catalogues (OPAC). The increased availability of electronic information has led libraries and librarians to develop relations with computer centres.

In some places, computer centres are responsible for electronic information, while the library is responsible for printed collections. Librarians are responsible for library collections and computer services in most educational institutions. In short, the shift from paper to digitized hypermedia has created a high degree of comfort from the traditional setup to the digital world. We are nations that must always recognize both Conventional and Digital Libraries. Even in developed countries like America, the UK, and Germany, the library facilitates both traditional and digital services for many reasons, such as because people of old age are not interested in electronic formats. Nevertheless, users of modern days cannot live with physical books. To fulfil the needs of both users, libraries should adopt hybrid library services in printed and electronic formats.

Digital Learning Notions in Higher Education Institutions

The Global Village Space, September 5, 2022

Colleges and universities have generally been quick to adopt new technologies, often even before their educational value has been proven. Throughout its history, higher education has experimented with technological advances as diverse as the blackboard and the personal computer. Digitalization is transforming the skills that youth and workers must acquire to succeed. In a globalized economy, digitalization's role highly affects both the learners and institutions that deliver and receive knowledge. Digital education will allow people to continue to participate in social life in a self-determined manner in the future. Universities are making themselves capable of corresponding with the digital age to remain relevant in technological education. Higher Education Institutes (HEIs) are experimenting with new technologies to support teaching and research in online forms that require different skills and processes. To overcome these challenges, higher education institutions adopted the digitalization process to provide universities with new opportunities, just like the learning process in the classroom. Digital Technologies offers a new framework and solutions to achieve the educational goals of HEIs. During COVID-19, it became evident that the only way to continue the education process is to opt for online education. There has been an inconclusive debate about digital learning and whether this learning will relate to individual elements in the teaching and learning process. The best way to change education design is to point out the valuable strategy for educational institutions. Here, we will indicate how most of the top-ranking universities in the world have experienced the notion of teaching and learning during the outbreak of COVID-19. In universities, digital learning is defined as the provision, use of learning materials and tools using digital learning technologies.

Digital technologies are modernizing education approaches and helping people gain many skills. The primary purpose of education is to acquire skills that have a high impact. In the last 50 years, there have been drastic changes in educational technologies and innovative learning processes. To solve the problems of students in the pandemic situation, digital technologies should be actively used. This is why universities across the globe rely more on digital formats for teaching and learning in the context of training and further education. Knowing that digitalization strategy can be pivotal in any pandemic or natural disaster will be interesting. Many universities have supported teachers and encouraged students to develop their skills online. You can access the resources quickly if you have a remote educational continuity strategy. Distance education is instruction between teachers and students when separated by physical distance and one or more technological media accomplish communication. Distance learning solutions include educational applications and tools developed to help students in lectures. Digital learning management systems and self-directed learning are great examples of educational technologies in the present scenario. The International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE) offers guidelines for implementing new instructions. A series of recent studies indicated that variation in technology and connectivity is available among students. Learners are encouraged on various levels to teach online remotely when physical classes are impossible. Distance learning is complex for teachers and students, exclusively in developing countries, due to the lack of technology such as internet access and educational materials. To

overcome these problems, other technologies like radios, televisions and online platforms may be used occasionally.

At the beginning of the academic year 2020, many institutions in developing countries launched a national strategy to enhance the educational process and guarantee continuity of learning. This strategy includes learning via television, access to digital platforms and learning through radio stations. In the last few decades, education across the globe has grown remarkably at all levels. The government forced Higher Education Institutions to switch to online and virtual education when we witnessed lockdown due to the pandemic. With this sudden shift away from the classroom in many parts of the globe, some wonder whether the adoption of online learning will continue to persist post-pandemic and how such a shift would impact the worldwide education market. Lastly, everyone should be thankful for Digital Learning in education as it helps in interactive multimedia classroom settings. The Digital Learning environment influences learning behaviour based on user-friendliness and functionality. As a result, students 'motivation can also be affected by the technical capability of the learning platform.

Benchmarking Research Trends in Pakistan's Universities

The Global Village Space, November 8, 2022

Pakistan's research activities have declined for the last few decades. However, new universities have been established that grant higher degrees. Still, the quality of research practices is in mourning conditions. It is a fact that the socioeconomic progress of any country relies on innovative applications and the commercialization of research. Allah has bestowed enormous talents on the youth of Pakistan. Students at the university level still need to be mentored and counselled properly to learn research skills compared to students in developed countries like the USA, UK, Germany, France, Australia, etc. Research in Western countries has been undertaken, starting with bachelor's degrees, and they have trained the youth in the right direction. In contrast to developing countries like Pakistan, students with master's degrees do not know how to start research. Research culture in Pakistan is lacking for many reasons. The most significant barrier in research is the English language. Most of our youth spend time in extracurricular activities. They take the utmost interest in social media, such as Facebook, Twitter, WhatsApp, YouTube, etc. Sports is yet another passion of our youth that intoxicates our brilliant minds. Few people are interested in research; however, due to a lack of counselling and mentoring, they need to grow well and achieve as per their desires. Pakistan is endowed with enormous natural resources and advanced capabilities in the public and private sectors; however, the youth in this region are paralyzed with intellectual brains; they just read to pass their exams. Government institutions need more research, contrary to the private sector. Research starts at graduation or post-graduation level; moreover, our students need help in research work at this stage. It has been astounding that most students do not know critical thinking at the Master's and M.Phil. levels; however, they read only to pass exams and, in return, produce nothing. Pakistan's education standards need to catch up to international standards; old and outdated curricula at the university level are yet other shortcomings that need to be addressed. The research centres in the private and public sectors are ill-equipped. As a result, they produce low-quality research. Lack of funding for quality research is another bottleneck, especially for Ph.D. research. Programmers' research institutions and universities produce research, but such research is limited to locked shelves, and people need to open it. Even our project stakeholders have never asked for field research undertaken at the university level. Most universities do not deposit research in the Higher Education Commission's repositories. The research produced in developing countries can only sometimes be considered by Western countries due to its poor analysis. Both teachers and students are objectionable because of the low research culture. Most of our MPhil and Ph.D. Scholars teach in different organizations; nevertheless, they do not guide the students on how to conduct research. Those who conduct research need to be appropriately evidence-based research. Evidence-based research is a systematic and transparent way to inform a new study that answers a valid, efficient, and inaccessible question. Teachers are known as counselling masters but do not produce intelligent brains. It is said that excellence comes with motivation. Critical thinking in Pakistan has no room in the educational space for new ideas to penetrate our minds. The need for experimental laboratories and libraries is another aspect of Pakistan's poor research culture. Most libraries present outdated materials, and experimental

laboratories need more quality equipment. What are the various causes of poor-quality research in Pakistan? These are man, machine, material, management, methods, environment, etc. From men's perspectives, these need more motivation in research skills at the university level and unqualified personnel. As far as machine affairs are concerned, we need updated technologies and over-reliance on manual methods. Regarding material matters, we do not have quality materials, and most educational institutions lack standardization. Conflict of interest is yet another phenomenon. When we talk about management issues in research culture, it means we need a vision, mission, or value system. Regarding research methods, we as researchers need to follow the quality of procedures, and above all, we as a nation are inferior in knowledge sharing. Read more: Librarian's Role in Massive Open Online Course (MOOC). We all are responsible for the poor culture of research trends in Pakistan. We are a country with enormous talents; we have a 60% youth bulge. We can make them talented with critical thinking. Research is an endeavour; everyone wants to be a researcher, but nobody wants to. Raewyn Connel rightly said, "Research is something everyone can and ought to do. It is simply collecting information and thinking systematically about it”

Slumping Reading Culture in Pakistan: Remedial Measures

Pakistan Observer, August 5, 2022[2]

Reading has become an essential part of our life. People at large are running away from readings. We are responsible for this slumping reading culture. Reading is the third skill that is required to learn any language. It is a lifelong process which never ends. People read for many reasons; one is to gain information and knowledge to solve today's problems. We need readings to get information and seek knowledge. The best stage of reading is the childhood period. Here, parents and teachers can boost their skills. Reading habits are nurtured from childhood to adulthood. It is assumed that a person who stops learning gets dull-minded. For learning any basic skills, reading will double their skills. Reading builds a nation's literacy; reading nations are leading nations. Reading has four main types: Skimming, Scanning,Intensive and Extensive. Skimming is also called gist reading, which means grasping the main ideas from the text. The best example is reading magazines and newspapers. Scanning is the second type of reading, which means taking a particular piece of information from the written text, e.g. getting the exact phone number from a telephone directory. Intensive reading is more detailed reading that requires more attention to grasp the texts in detail. Extensive reading is for pleasure. In this reading, the readers choose like-minded words and avoid unliked words. Pakistan is one of the most populous countries. The majority are young and below thirty years old. The country faces enormous political turmoil, poor governance, environmental degradation, low education standards, corruption, etc. Among them, the rumping reading culture has become a crucial issue. Our youth spend more time on social media like Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, WhatsApp, etc. Some other elements that affect the reading cultures are poverty, commercialization of education, lack of reading languages, absconding role of the state towards higher education, noise pollution, counselling of reading habits at schools, colleges and universities, poor attitude of the administration towards libraries and above all some invisible hands, etc. Some other problems affect the reading cultures in Pakistan: issues with decoding, poor comprehension of reading skills, mixed reading difficulties and speed in reading habits. How to improve the reading habits of our people, few significant steps should be taken to become good readers;

(1) Make notes of what you read.

(2) Work on building reading skills at home.

(3) Provide a platform to access reading resources like libraries, etc.

(4) Access to the correct information and services.

(5) Creation of reading groups.

(6) Mentoring and reading counselling at academia.

[2] https://pakobserver.net/slumping-reading-culture-in-pakistan-remedial-measures-by-abid-hussain/

(7) Encourage students who read more.

(8) Exchanging books as gifts instead of edible items or fragrances.

(9) Creating effective strategy.

(10) Provision of library hours in the curriculum.

(11) Visiting bookshops and libraries.

(12) Interaction with good readers.

(13) Encourage street and mobile library cultures.

(14) Making effective campaign, publicity and marketing.

(15) Reading campaign.

(16) Subject assignment at schools, colleges and universities.

(17) Organizing Book walks at schools, colleges and universities levels.

(18) Organizing workshops and seminars on reading habits.

(19) Visiting book fairs.

(20) Increasing the number of libraries at district, provincial and national levels.

(21) Celebrating world book and copyright days.

(22) The last but not the least, self interest in reading.

An American television producer, novelist, screenwriter and short story writer rightly said that "a reader lives a thousand lives before he dies". A faithful reader becomes an inspiration for others. Parents, teachers, and stakeholders are responsible for the declining reading culture. Let us make this nation prosperous with a reading culture. Reading nations are visionary nations.

It is said that today is a reader, and tomorrow is a leader. Readers are true adventurers in their lives. A person who reads more will visit more countries in his life. An American writer, Mary Pope Osborne, rightly said, "Reading is a passport to countless adventures". A man who reads a book is dreaming with open eyes. What we face today is because of the declining reading culture. Daron Acemoglu, the author of "Why Nations Fail" has articulated that a few nations prosper. In contrast, others are plagued with poverty and greed due to a lack of knowledge and the cultural gap among people, one of which is the declining reading culture. To make a country more vital, you need Gross Domestic Product (GDP) per capita, Gross National Income (GNI) per capita, life expectancy, birth rate and above all, education spending (% of GDP). Books are an excellent source for unlocking absent minds; let us open our minds with reading habits.

39 Ways to Connect People with Libraries

Pakistan Observer, May 18, 2022

LIBRARIES are community places in any society and are open to all without caste, creed, religion and age. In educational institutions, libraries are central places that provide essential services to help people and neighbourhoods thrive. The library offers vital resources to address community needs and is regarded as a central information-sharing hub. After the advent of advanced technologies, libraries have undergone many hurdles, like budget cuts, lack of professional staff, administrators' poor policies, stakeholders' negligence in education mafias, etc. Information communication technologies devalue the physical presence of readers who usually visit the library to quench their knowledge thirst. Hence, strategic changes increased awareness among librarians about dealing with clients in the era of information technology. Librarians worldwide experience and execute these technologies to reach current and retrospective patrons. The question arises whether libraries are still inhabited or uninhabited by patrons. The answer is head-shaking for librarians. However, numerous tactics can be adopted. The desolate places, which are called libraries, will again be inhabited. The first impression of any library is to appeal to patrons when they walk in the entryway; they feel whether the library is welcoming, aesthetically appealing, or guides them to what they desire. (1) A building with a sound ventilation system appeals to and attracts more library users. (2) Building a professional website can capture your patrons again into the library (3) Various Social Media Applications if adopted, can bring your users back into the library (4) Start posting to your social media and website (5) Make advertising and offers (6) Add yourself to local business directories (7) Adult discussion group every week (8) Arrange a business discussion for people in business inside the library (8) Orientation system for students living in surroundings (9) Making contacts with educational institutions to send their students in leisure time. (10) Contact local authors to come forward and discuss your book with the audience. (11) Movie shows and other aesthetic events (12) Create space for group discussion of learned classes (13) Arrange continuing education programme for professionals (14) Give the users the freedom to use library material with care (15) Placing IT tools inside the library like computers, scanning, photocopier machines and printing facilities (16) High-speed Internet and Wi-Fi facilities. (17) collaboration with other local libraries to exchange library services (18) Inter-Library Loan Facilities among regional libraries(19) To create a community hub, libraries should make partnerships with local organizations and companies partner with local organizations and companies (20) Organize information literacy programs regularly (21) Partnership with non-profits organizations to fill connectivity gaps (22) Bookmobile are more critical now than ever, bookmobile services on bike delivery systems can attract more users into the library (23) Use of social community centres like Masjid, church, public and a similar place of public gathering where people from different spheres come and share their views (24) Conducting library survey programme from time to time (25) Enlist yourself in local media centres to capture more public (26) To make community members feel safe, accepted and welcomed in their spaces (27) Update the library catalogue and share it with patrons on social media will increase the interest of readers (28) Hosting holiday events like Eid Millan, Christmas and other festivals for local people to celebrate(29) Arrangement of book walk programme and invite students and teaching faculty members(30) Featuring student poets through hosting a poetry reading programme, display of student's artwork or organizing student talent shows in the

library. (31). Many libraries have events and meeting rooms inside the library that require reservation (32) Information for reservation of the library hall should be made available on the library website(33) Host craft classes that not only teach patrons how to make greeting cards, decorations and more(34) Use of mobile apps for awareness programme like WhatsApp, Messenger, etc. (35) E-Newsletter, which covers other news and fresh arrivals in the library, should be shared with patrons regularly to capture them back into the library. (36) Users always love to read the latest books in print and electronic formats; they ought to be entertained with the latest stuff(37) Libraries are places for discovering new knowledge, it can help the patrons to find rich resources that meet their minds(38) Majority of libraries can be more appealing which offer access to free material like e-books, e-magazines and e-newspapers etc. (39) The last but not the least, attitude of librarians is because librarians' friendly and loving attitude can utilize both resources and services in the given libraries. It is said that libraries house plenty of online resources like research databases, e-books, movies, and online articles; in addition to digital material, many other sources can attract patrons back into the library. Libraries and librarians are committed to preserving the freedom to read, enhancing learning and ensuring access to information. These essential tips will be helpful for the librarian community in general.

Promoting National Pride through Library Culture

Pakistan Today February 7, 2022

The key to national development lies in cultivating talents and practical virtues. Sophisticated skills, a desirable attitude, an awakened mind and proper knowledge. Above all, the right knowledge can be attained with the help of the right resources, which require a handsome amount. Libraries are treasurers of the correct information to the right people at the right time. Archives, museums and libraries traditionally were intermediaries between users, distributors and creators. However, advanced technology altered the role of publishers, creators and users. People produce, publish and disseminate information in digital formats anywhere and anytime. The role of libraries is to preserve the records in digital and printed formats. Advanced technology has irrevocably and dramatically altered the linear nature of the traditional process. Now, the creator has become the distributor in the digital environment. People nowadays publish and communicate their published work through different platforms like Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, and other research blogs like ResearchGate, Academia, etc.

Today, every country improves its GDP and exports its goods to bring prosperity, peace and social harmony to its nations. They planned a national agenda programme to develop their economic growth for national development. Many countries demonstrate further development through broadband, digital inclusion and social development plans. Many countries focus on the knowledge economy, and for this, they produce a large amount of research frameworks in different disciplines. Planning these research activities required up-to-date knowledge and libraries to reach the goal framework through campaigns and meetings with government officials. Libraries are playing a tremendous role in achieving the goals of national development. In making any national strategy, the role of libraries can always be allowed because libraries offer access to the right information before formulating a government agenda.

It is a fact that all societies can have libraries, but broadly, libraries are built for three conditions: centralized populations, economic development, and political stability. Centralized populations, such as cities, towns, and conurbations, meant places where people resided on large scales. However, even small, stable populations are also excellent sources for library buildings like universities, research institutions, etc. Similarly, libraries cannot prosper when the primary energies and resources of the community are devoted to subsistence. Because building a library required a certain level of wealth and leisure to read. Opposed to the chaotic and conflicting environment, libraries are built in peaceful lands without war or other armed conflict. Revolt and warfare lead libraries to destruction, as seen in history. Many great libraries have been destroyed when empires fell or during war or other armed conflicts. The national libraries are good symbols for promoting national pride. National libraries are an old concept that can be traced back to the 17th Century in England, France, Denmark, Germany, and Scotland; some newly built libraries in the mid of 18th Century, like Austria, Italy, Greece, Norway, Spain, Sweden and Ireland, among others, which stored and preserved enormous collections for the general masses. They collected huge collections of repositories and have maintained the

cultural heritage of their countries. These heritages are published books, manuscripts documents, and other records in different formats.

Several nations passed a law that each publication published around the country would be sent to the National Library. It creates a handsome collection, prepares a national bibliography, and then shares it with publishers at national and international levels. In some places, the National Library also grants ISBN Services (A unique number used to identify a product by publishers, booksellers, internet retailers, librarians, and others concerned). One can trace a book's title, edition, and format with the help of an ISBN Number. In short, the role of the National Library in national pride is highly commendable.

Another sound library that offers services to community members without caste, creed, and religion to meet the information needs of their community is called a Public Library. These libraries are also in public universities, where people get the desired information without caste and discrimination. It offers services to people of all ages, genders, races, religions, languages, etc. Public libraries preserve man's thoughts, ideas and make them free to the entire community. It is known as a breathing force for education, culture, and information as it is an indispensable agent for nurturing peace and the spiritual well-being of society. The role of Public Libraries in national pride is unique and up to the mark.

The government should build libraries at the provincial and national levels to lift people out of poverty, unemployment, racism, and other forms of discrimination, and simplify social and cultural life. Librarians need to be aware of making simplistic assumptions to help make informed decisions for the entire community.

Libraries drive the citizens through a visionary mind. They are excellent sources for collecting organizations and disseminating information that society accesses and uses to inform themselves with robust knowledge organized in the library. In short, the libraries are tangible assets for national pride.

Preventing Library Demolitions

Pakistan Today, January 11, 2022

Libraries are true guarantors of a people's heritage and preserve people's knowledge for future generations. They are places where reading materials (books/non-books) are acquired, preserved, organized and disseminated for education, research, and reference services. Libraries culture is rising in the rest of the world; however, it is in dwindling stages in Pakistan. Libraries in Pakistan face tremendous challenges, including budget issues, lack of professional staff, support from the authorities, and scarcity of readership, among others.

The country's growth is measured by Gross Domestic Product (GDP) per capita, Gross National Income (GNI) per capita, and other measures. Though the birth rate, life expectancy, controlling corruption, and so on also lead the nations to a prosperous future, good governance, checks and balances, and a knowledge-based economy make a country more progressive and rise compared to the rest of the world. If the Government spends a handsome amount on education as a total percentage of GDP, such nations will have a high prominence worldwide.

For a knowledge-based economy, innovative quality research and libraries have a strong correlation and are regarded as the need of the day. Poor information and libraries can never move a nation in the right direction. It is said that developed countries hold developed libraries, such as The British Library in the United Kingdom, the Library of Congress in the USA, the Shanghai Library in China, the Russian State Library in Russia, and the Royal Danish Library in Denmark. These libraries hold huge collections for quality and innovative research. Despite Pakistan's role in library culture, it is mourning and lagging even among developing countries.

Though the Government of Pakistan is trying to build this country into a more prosperous, wealthier and knowledge-based economy, several educational classes are trying to make it more prominent and brighter; however, fewer elements are blocking them.

Over the last few days, two episodes of a library demolition culture in Pakistan have come to light, with reports appearing in the press. The two public libraries concerned are the Rawalpindi Cantonment Library and the Parachinar Public Library. A historian, Lucien Polastron, in a book named Books On Fire, wrote that "the loss of a library bears historical and social ramifications of a scale that cries for thoughtful and heartfelt objectivity." Similarly, in that book, it has been explained that the destruction of the world's largest libraries, such as the burning of the Great Library of Alexandria, the Libraries of the Chinese Qing Dynasty in Nazi-Occupied Europe, and the 2003 Invasion of Iraq, are the worst catastrophes in the library history.

Libraries are always destroyed by natural calamities, earthquakes, floods, and fires, but burning a library through terrorist acts is equal to burning those authors whose books existed in those libraries.

The Rawalpindi Cantonment Library, a 124-year-old library, has been converted into a computer section without the trust's approval. It was one of the finest libraries for local inhabitants. This Library was renovated by General Ziaul Haq, who provided funds amounting to Rs 1.8 million and formed a management committee to run the library's affairs. Later on, the then-president of Pakistan, Farooq Leghari, took responsibility by approving a handsome grant to renovate this library in 1998. What a shameless action it is to convert a library into a computer section without the approval of the trust. Libraries are public spheres. They ought to be established for the masses living in the vicinity.

Another story is demolishing the Public Library in Parachinar, a tribal zone of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, the sole public library for the area's inhabitants. It was shocking to know that the library had been converted into the office and residence of the administrative officer. The then-former governor of KP established the library in Parachinar, the late Lt Gen Fazal-e-Haq, in 1982. Instead of launching new libraries in the region, the demolition of present buildings is taking place. That should be strictly prohibited by Pakistan's government, particularly the Punjab and KPK's provincial governments.

Government authority, stakeholders, library associations, the National Library, the Culture and Heritage Ministry, the Education Ministry, and others must enact policies to promote a library culture and avoid library destruction. They should also act against those elements that convert library buildings into offices and computer halls. Vandalism of the library buildings should also be discouraged. It is argued that when people demolish libraries, it is similar to burning books. Heinrich Heine, a German poet, writer and literary critic, rightly said, "Where they burn books, at the end, they also burn people."

Conference Report on KohaCon2021: An International Conference that left a SAGA behind
December 13-18, 2021

Koha is one of the most commendable open-source software based on Integrated Library Systems (ILS). This software serves the entire community with robust technology: schools, colleges, universities, public libraries, etc. KOHA is derived from the Maori language, meaning a gift or donation. Chris Cormack from New Zealand initiated the software in 1999-2000. Koha is a fully-featured, scalable library management system. Koha has been developed for libraries of various sizes, volunteers, and support companies worldwide. The software is converted into 26 different languages of several continents. The latest release occurred on November 25, 2021, with a new version, 21.1.

KOHA has been implemented in diverse libraries for automation purposes and is designed to use a vibrant library community that serves the libraries in a wider range. Each year, this community organizes international conferences in different countries. The first Koha Conference was held in Paris, France, in 2006. Pakistan is fortunate enough to have organized this conference at the world level, and it is undoubtedly a proud moment for all Pakistanis, especially for library professionals and academia. Such conferences have improved the soft image of Pakistan and left behind a saga of mutual understanding among sovereign countries. Conferences promote the leadership quality of professionals and boost the morale of newly inducted professionals in any field. Conferences are great networking sources and an omen to learn new knowledge from cognitive minds, especially in Free Open-Source Software (FOSS). Allah has bestowed a good spark on the motherland of Pakistan. People in different spheres promote the soft image of Pakistan at the national and international levels. Such people are God-gifted, and they work dedicatedly and wholeheartedly to make this country prosperous, wealthiest, and distinctive in other nations. Some scholars in librarianship especially need help to make this profession a source of creative knowledge. They bring easiness to the nation's readers.

Such people contribute diverse knowledge in scholarly writing, IT and other skills. The incumbent conference was held in the National Library of Pakistan under the theme KohaCon 2021. The conference was organized by the KohaCon president, Mr. Sher Afzal Khan, a dynamic library professional working to better the community worldwide, generally and particularly in Pakistan. Mr. Afzal has trained more than 1000 fellow librarians to use open-source software. It is argued that more than 150 organizations nationwide use KOHA (an open-source software) for their library management. All commercial software requires a heavy amount of licensing, and fortunately, this one is free for all with open-access coding and modification. Due to a lack of funding, developing countries like Pakistan have adopted free and open-source software. The Government of Pakistan should encourage such a community to opt for robust technology with minimal resources.

The National Library Pakistan has always supported the library community by involving professionals in utilizing this platform for organizations of wonderful events like KohaCon 2021 to uplift the community. It offers training workshops, seminars and conferences, adding value-added services to the library community. The National Library Pakistan organized the KohaCon 2021 from 13-17 December 2021. A five-day-long conference brought together diverse communities from different provinces of Pakistan and abroad. Academia, IT industry specialists, Publishers, and Library practitioners joined this mega event and shared their thoughts with the vast community. The conference combined more than 300 professionals at the National and International levels. People from Pakistan and abroad also participated through Zoom. Around 200 people, including Library &

Information Science professionals, IT professionals, educationists, dignitaries, and representatives from more than 18 countries, including the USA, Canada, India, Turkey, Philippines, Saudi Arabia, Nepal, Sri Lanka, New Zealand, Bangladesh and Cypress, participated in this mega event. The most interesting story at this conference was the experience of a KOHA pioneer named Chris Cormack from New Zealand, who highlighted his journey of KOHA, how he started this software, and shed light on the current status of Koha. He informed the audience that over 100 global contributors now contribute their experiences with this software. The conference undoubtedly provided an international forum for the diverse community from academia, industry, and public sector organizations. Various poster presentations, workshops, and special sessions were arranged to interest the participants. It has served as an international platform for participants of diverse cultures and countries. Renowned scholars shared new innovative ideas with participants. The Chief Guest, the Honorable Ali Muhammad Khan (Minister of State for Parliamentary Affairs, Government of Pakistan inaugurated the conference. He shared his educational thoughts about library services when he joined London Law College.

He said that the libraries at that time were highly paid organizations and served the entire community with zeal and zest. He also articulated that Librarians in Pakistan are talented enough and are converting traditional libraries into modern information networking. He congratulated the president of KohaCon for organizing this vibrant conference in Pakistan and ensured that he would help the community by raising their voices in upcoming parliamentary voices. The Director-General of the National Library Islamabad welcomed the audience warmly and appreciated the KohaCon team's effort to organize this excellent event. Mr. Sher Afzal articulated during his thanking speech that the conference will bring positive and fruitful gestures for the motherland. He also extended that Pakistan is lucky enough to have this event at the National level; he opined that many developing countries desire such events at the state level, but it takes sweat and enough energy to attract foreigners to countries like Pakistan. Still an active member, he was granted the opportunity to host KohaCon in Pakistan for the first time. He extended that International KohaCon has organized 20 conferences in different developed countries, and we are lucky enough to host this conference in Pakistan. During his final remarks, he ensured that if the Government of Pakistan is interested, we can organize this international event twice a year. He also opined that such conference plays a key role in the soft image of Pakistan. Mr. Afzal requested the Federal Minister that the Government of Pakistan support academia, IT experts, and people in different spheres like librarianship to organize the mega-events.

In the academia's first session, experts and library practitioners presented their experiences to a scholarly audience; the first paper was presented by Mariym & DR. Muhammad Waseem Zia. Under the title Study on Managing Koha Open-Source Library Management System: Fazaia Ruth PFAU Medical College Library Experience. The second paper was presented by Parthasarathi & Mukhopadhyay from India, titled REST is the Best? Integration of Koha with other domain-specific software. Ghulam Hyder Panhwar presented the third paper from Jamshoro, Implementation of Koha Integrated Library Management System in Faculty of Dentistry at LUMHS, Jamshoro. Koha's experiences presented the fourth paper in different libraries of Turkey by Mengu Yazicioglu from Turkey. The fifth paper was presented by Eugene Jose T. Espinoza (Philippines). Creation of automated indexing of Philippine local newspaper articles for Koha ILS: an exploratory study. On the second day, December 14, 2021, speakers from different countries presented good papers and shared their thoughts. In this regard, Mr. Syed Habib Jafri presented a paper on PASTIC Services Regarding Koha in Pakistan. Syed Adnan Adil has presented the second paper from the UK titled Scope and Trends of Library Management Systems (LMS) within the UK market. The third paper was presented by Dr. Muhammad Rafiq, University of Punjab (Conference Head of Scientific

Committee), "Status of Koha and its implantations in Pakistan," and a comprehensive presentation was shared by the pioneer of Koha, Mr. Chris Cormack from New Zealand and shed lights on the historical background of KOHA. On the second day, Ms. Shrijeeta Roy from India presented the fourth paper titled India Script-Based Retrieval Issues and UIs in Koha.

On December 15, two sessions were arranged; the first paper in the first session was presented by Prof. Mohan Raj Pradhan, Ph. D., titled Integration Open Data Sources with Vufind Chairman HealthNet Nepal Secretary VuFind Software. Liaquat Ali Rahoo presented the second paper from Sindh Pakistan titled Adoption of Open-Source Software for the Development of Institutional Repository in Higher Educational Institutes of Pakistan. The third paper was presented by Sher Afzal Khan, the President and Founder of Koha Con, under the title Current Status and Trends Towards Implementation of Koha in the Libraries of Pakistan. Sher Afzal Khan: President and Founder Koha Pakistan Lead Consultant OSS| Pioneer Country Ambassador Dspace. The fourth paper was presented by George Williams, titled Next Search Catalog Coordinator at NEKLS. Hirak Jyotihazarika presented the fifth paper from India; the title was Koha USA Experience Koha on Cloud Implementation & Security and its Impact on North East India.

On December 16, the expert team undertook the event and made a solid plan to improve KOHA and library setup in Pakistan. At this stage, challenges and experiences faced by libraries and librarians were discussed. The community decided that these experts inscribed some policy plans that would improve these problems with time. On December 17, Kohacon organized a culture day, and participants were taken to the most beautiful cities of Islamabad and Rawalpindi. All participants enjoyed the serene beauty of Islamabad and discovered popular places like Lok Virsa Museum, Rawal Lake, Faisal Mosque, Pir Sohawa, Islamabad Zoo, Pakistan Museum of National History, Centaurus Mall, and so on.

Conferences are good sources of information sharing, networking, and exploring experiences in a broader sense. International Conferences require high calibers, budgeting, and hard work to organize. F. Scott Fitzgerald rightly said that no grand idea was ever born at a conference, but many foolish ideas have died there. Pakistan is among the most beautiful lands and has a talented spark in different fields. All International conferences left behind a saga of goodwill among participants. It is a source of soft image, tourism, and people-to-people network. People carry a positive image. People always forget everything in the host countries, but the love being extended by host countries can never be forgotten. The KohaCon community in Pakistan has the potential talents to attract international speakers on one platform, and conferences are a means of getting ideas together. International conferences can only be organized if you have robust minds, leadership sparks, and professional experiences. Mr. Afzal and his entire team did that. The Government of Pakistan should encourage Associations, organizations, and platforms that work for national causes. Library professionals do their best in this regard. They undoubtedly play a tremendous role, but support from Electronic and Printed media, the Government of Pakistan, and Funding agencies could double their role. International conferences give Access to the Latest Tools of The Trade, Acquiring & Honing New Skills, Refreshing Minds, and Pushing Your Limits. The KohaCon 2021 did that. In short, it has left a SAGA behind. Long Live Librarianship, Long live Pakistan.

Attributes of Librarianship as Academic Discipline

December 26, 2021

The phrase 'academic discipline' certainly incorporates many elements, such as school discipline, college discipline, etc. In the institutional scenario, a discipline means a teacher, professor, or proctor who controls the organization with stipulated rules and regulations. Academic disciplines like Science, Humanities, Arts, and others are technical terms for learning organization and systematically producing new knowledge. Hopefully, this will remove doubts about librarianship being considered a discipline. It meets all requirements like any other discipline. It follows theories, produces research, runs organizations, is taught at the university level, and carries other academic requirements as other disciplines have. Today's people are still determining whether librarianship is a discipline or not. They should not. Every discipline follows a few traits and attributes, such as Engineering, Law, Medical Sciences, Applied Sciences, and others. This discipline becomes authoritative when it follows the identified traits devised by experts in their field. Librarianship as a discipline can be categorized by following the parameters formulated by subject experts. Many people believe that librarianship is neither a profession nor a discipline. Librarianship as a profession has already been defined in my recent column written in another newspaper. However, the discipline as a subject can be over-viewed in your article. The question arises of whether librarianship is considered to be disciplined or not. The answer is yes.

A discipline has a particular research object, such as law, politics, society, etc. Research in one field may sometimes be correlated with other disciplines, such as the role of libraries in Information Communication Technology (ICT). Information technology is a broad computer science topic, but it greatly impacts library services. Similarly, Medical Sciences use the term technologies in their research. So, it combines two subjects for research in a specific discipline. A discipline's second trait is the accumulation of specialist knowledge. It means theorists produce theories in their discipline, and this knowledge is accumulated to make a discipline. These are guiding principles for any discipline taught at school, college, university level, or other institutions. The Dewey Decimal Classification Scheme (DDC) is an example of accumulative knowledge in Librarianship. The Library of Congress Subject Headings (LCSH), etc. The third trait that defines the subject as a discipline is the existence of theories and concepts that help accumulate specialist knowledge. Philosophers produce these theories in the disciplines in which they are concerned, and they discuss the subject of the discipline with logic and practical knowledge. Some popular theorists in librarianship are Gabriel Naudé, Martin Schrettinger, S.R. Ranganathan, etc. These theorists accumulate knowledge with logic, which defines the subject as a discipline.

The fourth trait of a discipline is using specific terminologies in their relevant field. All disciplines have specific technical languages adjusted to their research objectives; accounting terms differ from medical terms, and applied sciences terms differ from natural sciences. Library science uses different terms such as catalog, bibliography, indexing, etc., which is difficult for other disciplines to understand. The fifth attribute for specifying a discipline is the institutional manifestations of the subject taught at college and university levels. All disciplines have their professional associations for recognition. All have a recognized growing body of scholarship. All disciplines train their workers with continuing education. In librarianship, some broad associations are the American Library Associations and Pakistan Library Associations, among others. These organizations uplift their members and guide them to grow in their profession up to a higher level. The sixth trait of a discipline is learning through scholarly investigation, which provides a structure for students at the graduate and postgraduate levels. These scholarly contents make the discipline distinct from other disciplines. In librarianship, scholarly research is increasing daily, which is a good omen for this subject.

The seventh trait of an academic discipline is affiliation with the department at the university level. These departments provide advanced research scholarships for their graduates to promote the discipline. Across the globe, different universities offer librarianship at the graduate and postgraduate levels. In Pakistan, different schools are working to promote librarianship as a discipline. Professional training in the concerned discipline is the eighth attribute of a discipline as a subject. These training pieces distinguish the discipline from other disciplines. Knowledge experts carry out training in the field in question. Training might be at the administrative level, such as leadership programs or advancing their professionals' IT skills. The ninth attribute of any discipline is the subject at a higher education level, such as Archaeology, Anthropology, Space Science, Library and Information Sciences, etc. These subjects are taught to produce experts in the field as a discipline. In short, all individuals associated with academic disciplines are commonly referred to as experts or specialists in the field to train them and educate them to follow the ethical code of that discipline. It also deals with the field of study, inquiry, branch of knowledge, etc.

Librarianship as a Profession

Pakistan Observer, December 18, 202

FIVE attributes are generally associated with accounting, engineering, law, medicine, etc. All these attributes make a profession. A subject and discipline that does not follow these attributes cannot be considered a profession. Coming into librarianship as a profession, a few attributes with several examples define librarianship as a profession. Every profession requires a unique body of knowledge that relies on principles and concepts. This body of knowledge should be codified and documented and learned through formal education like colleges, universities, similar institutions, etc. Most professions teach this accumulative knowledge at professional school or college levels. For example, a person who wants to become a lawyer will join a law school; an engineer should become a professional engineer when he proceeds by being admitted to some professional schools. Librarians can become professionals when they are admitted to library schools. All professions enroll in a teaching school to earn a degree to step into any profession. They might get a degree at the graduate and postgraduate level to become professionals. The second trait to become a professional is the standard of entry.

There should be a minimum standard to enter the profession, which implies progression in a career. Simply put, it is a place from which a career path begins. It should have an accepted route to enter into a career. This involved formal education to an academic entry, experience in the field, apprenticeship program test scores, etc. To become a recognized professional, one should follow this standard entry. Library schools, institutions, and internship programs are entering this field. The service code of ethics is the third attribute to becoming a professional in any field. It means an ethical standard or a code of ethics in the profession. It is appropriate behavior and attitude towards the people whom you serve. It also provides the rule of self-policing toward unethical behavior. It teaches us the legal controls of your career.

One should adopt these ethical behaviors when entering any field or profession. Before entering this profession, library students should be interested in the service code of ethics. The fourth principle of becoming a professional is service orientation in a community. It reflects an attitude that directs a person to commit to bettering the profession. Promoting the profession requires time, money, energy, and convention. One should avoid self-interest to make a profession better. The person should also contribute to the existing body of knowledge by publishing ideas and projecting their professional knowledge better. Professional commitment in this regard will be stronger than that of an employer. Nobody will violate the professional norms and leave their employing organization rather than violate the professional standards of practices or ethics. Librarians should attend continuing education programs to uplift this profession. The last attribute to becoming a professional is the sanctioning organization. It evolves the authenticating body or sanctioning organization. It is also a self-policing agency that sets standards in the profession. It includes theoretical concepts that lead a person to be a good researcher and a living legend in that field.

Here, a person should learn through continuous education. He should also develop their career by attending certificate programs and organizations to raise their voice. In this stage, people should learn from existing knowledge, consult with peers, and publish research on changing technology and environmental opportunities. The librarians, in this regard, will project their field. Here, they will initiate ideas through research and similar projects. Such sanctioning in organizations will help them prove librarianship as a profession. These few guiding principles have defined a profession, albeit many of us still need to learn what a profession is.

However, we all are engaged in some profession; we do not know how to gauge a profession. This article will give insight into the attributes and traits needed to gauge a profession. This scribe hopes this short article will clarify your perception of the profession.

Electronic Theses: Where does Pakistan stand

March 12, 2021

Electronic Theses in Pakistan have picked up immense pace over the last two decades, but 2006 is regarded as a milestone in the history of electronic theses. When Dr. Ata Ur Rahman took responsibility as Chairman of the Higher Education Commission, he, for the first time, introduced the Pakistan Research Repository. Pakistan has become a symbol of quality research in the last several years. New universities have been set up. According to the HEC website, there are 266 universities in Pakistan; 157 are Public Sector Universities, and 109 are private degree-awarding universities. Each university offers a degree in the bachelor's, master's, MPhil, and even PhD programme. These universities aim to transmit knowledge through instructions, scholarship, and research. Universities are meant to apply knowledge through public services.

Each university offers library services in their disciplines. Universities are researching various topics and producing theses in binding formats. Now the question arises: where do these theses go? The answer is to a supervisor, the HEC, and libraries. Libraries are preserving such theses in the locked shelves and granting no access to the young scholars. These are prerequisites for obtaining MPhil and PhD degrees. Previous theses provide background knowledge for scholars to discover new facts from the old knowledge yet to be researched. Students in Pakistan and abroad rely more on opening Google. The American Library Association conducted a general survey and found that 92 percent of scholars worldwide are researching the open-access material available on Google and similar search engines. People are shuffling only eight percent of the material for research. Ninety-two percent of material exists in the printed format available in libraries (physically) or has been locked and placed out of access for researchers (available in Paid Databases like JSTOR, Taylor& Francis, Springer link, Project-muse, and similar Databases.

Physicists first started the E-Theses initiative in 1991. It was an Open Repository System when they introduced the Arxiv in 1991. The purpose of this initiative was to showcase the scholarly works of Physicists on a broader level. Since that time, numerous projects have been made available in different countries. A few praiseworthy examples of electronic theses are the DART-Europe E-These portal, which offers over 106,000 doctoral electronic theses. Ethos is a digital library project that provides free online theses. PQDT Open is a Proquest project covering research from Canada and the USA. MIT Digital Library offers a collection of theses at the Master's and doctoral levels. Worldwide ETD Indexes offers a collection of online theses and dissertations and helps researchers find material in their respective fields.

Quality research is a dream job for a common Pakistani, and that could only be achieved through the monitoring system of HEC. Preserving Electronic research on the HEC website can bring these dreams into reality. The Pakistan Research Repository was a splendid project for researchers in Pakistan and abroad. The project is still available online and can be accessed via the internet. It only covers PhD and MPhil theses. Universities in Pakistan do not fully cooperate to offer retrospective and current research as generated in electronic formats. They sent a copy to the HEC Repository in printed form only and did not bother to send the electronic version of the same copy. Today's age is the age of technology, and people need to visit libraries physically. They need electronic copies of books, articles, and even theses. Public sector universities in Pakistan are producing quality research, but there is still a dire need for electronic theses. Theses in electronic formats have become the need of the day.

HEC may either update the old software for MPhil and PhD theses or produce indigenous software to preserve electronic theses. A login password ought to be granted to universities in Pakistan, and the HEC should direct them to put their theses on the HEC Portal. Open research appeals to

researchers more than paid content. The HEC is requested to extend the Pakistan Research Repository Project to the provincial level to make all electronic theses available for the present and forthcoming generation. Teamwork could make it more expeditious. Quality research is a dream job for a common Pakistani, and that could only be achieved through the monitoring system of HEC. Preserving Electronic research on the HEC website can bring these dreams into reality.

Why is SNS useful for Library Services?

The Pakistan Observer, November 28, 2021

LIBRARIES are true guarantors for preserving human records in printed or electronic formats. Modern libraries abreast themselves with the latest tools. Librarians are experiencing different methods to facilitate the end-users. Gone are the days when librarians were confined to four walls. As we know, technology has brought tremendous development in different spheres. The library is one of them, which deals with acquiring, preserving, organizing, and disseminating information. In a traditional setup, libraries use manual methods. Now, people are getting smarter day by day. They use different technologies to grasp information quickly. To determine readers' tastes, libraries have introduced coffee bars, entertainment corners, medical facilities, and gyms to facilitate users. Librarians have opted for Social Networking Sites (SNS) such as Facebook, Linked In, Google +, YouTube, Twitter, Blogger, etc. Although some websites have yet to be fully adopted, some social networking sites have been brought into use by patrons. To meet the users' information needs, social networking sites are highly commendable tools for end-users and librarians. People used the telephone in the past while getting help from the librarians. Now, library professionals serve them with different dimensions. Among social networking sites, Facebook is one of the most extendable technologies that help users capture the latest updates from their parent organizations.

Libraries introduced Facebook pages to engage users with opening and closing times, website information, advertisements, etc. WhatsApp has been a fast-growing technology for the last few years. Instant messages can be shared with users through this medium. People connect with librarians directly and demand their desired material, even outside the library's working hours. Through this technology, Librarians can share quick information without any difficulty. A blog or Weblog is a commonly used technology; a blog is where one can express oneself to the world, whether as a participant or a co-creator. Through this technology, people build information; however, a librarian can promote and project their services. Wikis is yet another important, powerful tool that can be used for knowledge management. Librarians can utilize this technology to share their knowledge with extensive audiences. Twitter has been the fastest-growing technology for the last few years. Many Libraries have created their Twitter pages, attracting millions of users to know about their services. Only the Library of Congress has more than one million followers.

Librarians can introduce their libraries through this technology to attract patrons without spending a penny. Flickr is the greatest tool for sharing and distributing images. Numerous events take place in daily life, inside and outside the libraries. These events can be utilized and archived for future use with date tags.
A Librarian can also share the cover pages of new arrivals for the audience. Flick offers free services to the entire community, including libraries. Flickr is an excellent marketing tool that sensitizes users to general library services. Other social networking sites like Ellg, Ning, Google +, Myspace, etc, are the most usable sites that can project library services in the right direction. Librarians should use these technologies to avoid spending amounts to reach their patrons. Library Thing is the fastest-growing technology among librarians of different geographies. It helps librarians catalog their books, share them, and connect users to general library services.

YouTube is a widely used technology in different spheres. Libraries worldwide can utilize it for useful information, such as events organized in their respective departments.Lectures, seminars, and workshops can also be shared on this platform. Eminent figures can capture more of an audience while uploading on YouTube. This technology can be utilized to reach the patrons for their desired goals. LinkedIn has become the largest growing network after Facebook. Still, many librarians need to be fully aware of utilizing this technology to reach their patrons, fellow librarians and other prominent figures. This technology can also project library services to a larger audience. Many social people prefer this technology to Facebook because it offers sober content and avoids irrelevant content on this platform. A Librarian can use it for Selective Dissemination of Information, etc.

Process of Knowledge: Role of Libraries

Pakistan Observer, November 14, 2021

According to the Oxford Dictionary, knowledge is "facts, information, and skills acquired through experience or education; the theoretical or practical understanding of a subject." Numerous types of knowledge exist, such as empirical, encoded, descriptive, dispersed, and domain knowledge. However, three main types of knowledge are Explicit, Implicit, and Tacit. The knowledge that can be found in documented information is called explicit knowledge. The knowledge one can apply is considered Implicit Knowledge, and Tacit knowledge is what we know, the understood information. The knowledge can be processed through a common infrastructure. According to Richard E-Rubin (A prominent Scholar of Library and Information Science), "The knowledge infrastructure is composed of the informational, recreational, educational, and cultural components of our society." It can be viewed as how knowledge and information are created, disseminated, and used in society. In the traditional setup, the knowledge process was processed with five factors: creator; these included artists, authors, etc, who embodied their ideas in physical shapes or production. These creators are still playing an important role in society. They contribute knowledge in order to abreast the people with ideas which are lacking them. The second factor includes Products; products are available in common shapes such as books, paintings, articles, databases, websites, and other content available in digital and other formats. The third factor of the Knowledge process is Distributors: publishers, vendors, the Web, etc. They also play a positive role and transmit knowledge through various means. The fourth factor of the knowledge process is Discriminators. These are the most important pillars in knowledge dissemination, which include institutions, agencies, and libraries. The fifth factor of the knowledge process is the Users. This is the most prominent factor in the knowledge process. The above fourth process is working for the users of knowledge. Creators, producers, distributors, and discriminators produce knowledge for users. If no user exists, all four processes are considered null and void.

Modern Information Technology has altered the traditional process of knowledge. In today's age, creators are the discriminators and distributors, and no other agencies have evolved to distribute the knowledge for outreach. Users are targeted and pre-planned; creators target the end-users while producing new knowledge. Traditionally, library archives and museums' role was to disseminate information, serving as an intermediary between users, distributors, and creators. However, advanced technology has created new possibilities for creators to distribute their knowledge frequently. Today, a novelist can write and put a novel online; similarly, musicians can distribute their music online for free or a fee. Knowledge management has three main areas: accumulating, storing, and sharing knowledge. Libraries are hubs where knowledge is required, stored, and shared for Study, Research, and Reference purposes. The knowledge-based economy has become a buzzword for the last few decades. It has been observed that Libraries are extensive platforms for quality knowledge. Strong libraries should support the readers in accessing the organizational goals. Knowledge management requires linkages of information with information, and libraries have dealt with this subject since its inception. Libraries help with both implicit and explicit knowledge. As mentioned earlier, traditionally, libraries collect, organize, and store knowledge, but libraries have become treasurer houses of human knowledge in the economic age. The 21st-Century libraries are facing several challenges. Soon, the library will inevitably face the new subject of knowledge management.

Now, the question arises of how the process of knowledge can be managed in libraries. In this regard, P. Galagan has suggested some rules, which include producing new knowledge, using external sources for accessing this knowledge, projecting the knowledge in documented form like database and software, etc., embedding the knowledge, transferring knowledge around the organization, facilitating knowledge, and measuring knowledge value through knowledge management. There are various strategies for knowledge creation, but libraries should adopt a knowledge-centered strategy that helps create new knowledge. Librarians should focus on building a knowledge-concentral culture.

Why Libraries are Important

Voice of Libraries, September 30, 2021

Libraries are as old as human civilizations. These are important institutions for human and national buildings. Suppose libraries were not important institutions for the last 5000 years; they would have died long ago. Libraries are places for culture and knowledge preservation. It plays an essential role in society. It creates opportunities for literacy, learning, and education. It shapes the new ideas for a creative and innovative society. It ensures an authentic record of knowledge created by the past generation. Libraries are unique places for educational resources, where people thirst for their research quench. It provides 100% safe access to educational resources free of cost. All resources at the library are free without spending money.

Those are books, access to the internet, and academic training programmes. Libraries are helpful in local economies. Many have argued that libraries are not concerned with the economy but are crucial in financially strengthening the local economy. It provides free internet, workspace, and material that help communities find jobs and similar opportunities. It buys hardware, software, and information that help people find opportunities. Libraries make communities healthier with their resources, known as centers for curation, health, and well-being. It also offers internet facilities where people seek health information and services. Libraries are the most significant sources of preserving history and truth. In today's age, information available on the internet is fake and not authentic. Libraries house centuries of learning, history, information and reality and are great defenders of the fight against misinformation. Libraries connect communities to share their ideas freely under a roof, like town halls, public parks, and other community centers. Libraries are hubs of communities for sharing good thoughts. It brings people of different castes, creeds, and races together.

Libraries help people to elevate themselves and their situations in the right direction. It is an excellent source of people's connection, where one feels comfortable and peaceful enough to sit there for long hours. As libraries are portals to the world's knowledge, librarians preserve these records for today's generation and the future. Libraries are excellent sources of value to the neighborhood. Those living near public libraries are great opportunists in enhancing their quality of life. Even public libraries are valuable places for meetings. Libraries are sources of community gathering for social issues and decision-making. People of communities come and sit together and share their views. Libraries break down boundaries and offer free literacy programme for low-literate and non-English people. It also provides outreach programmes that teach the community of multicultural and multilingual society. It is an excellent source for home-bound elderly, institutionalized individuals, prisoners, blind and hearing-impaired people.

Research Data Management Services – Role of Academic Libraries

September 19, 2021

The Cambridge Dictionary says, "The data is facts and statistics collected together for reference or analysis." The Data is the new oil, said Data Clive Humby. Organizing and managing the data is a hectic and challenging job for analysts, organizers, and all data curators. Research Data Management has become a controversial issue in modern library services. Research Data Management services in academic libraries aim to make research more efficient, accessible, and reliable for result-oriented innovative ideas. It increases the impact of research in planning and preserving data in a repository throughout its life cycle. It involves several stakeholders, both within and outside the university community. Research Data Management is a scientific process that helps librarians manage and share data in an organized order that is easily accessible and reliable for discovering new ideas.

Many libraries around the globe are practicing Research Data Management services. Academic Libraries are great sources for Research and data management practices because they have a long history of working with and training research and curating and preserving information. Librarians are key players in research data management because they acquire, preserve, and disseminate information organizationally. Academic libraries are important because they are unique in allowing researchers to be abreast of organized data. Over the past few decades, research data management has been emphasized in academic libraries as scientific advancements in collaborative, data-intensive, and computational research are increasing. Many scholars need more time to handle data management requirements in these situations. They also have concerns about data management issues. In such circumstances, academic libraries have actively been involved in research data services in full data life-cycle. Librarians in academic libraries are involved in data management to overcome the selection, preservation, maintenance, and archiving of digital curation for research in an academic environment. Libraries are great sources for knowledge creation and ideal centers for research data services.

Data Management Services are key tools for professional librarians, and they are well aware of their potential role in handling this information carefully. However, different libraries still need to be in the same phase, mostly related to curation and data management at institutional levels. Librarians face many challenges, such as professional training, collaborations with other institutions, capacity buildings, equipment, tools and broader institutional support. If appropriate training for research data management services were granted to the librarians in academic libraries, we are optimistic that academic libraries will flourish their services more sophisticatedly.

Stakeholders and policymakers might exploit the role of academic librarians more collaboratively if support for funding, training, and tools were granted to the librarians working in academic libraries. Leading libraries have recommended different tools to overcome these challenges, but lack of funding and professional training are key areas that need more development. Research and data management services in academic libraries are timely significant in the current landscape for librarians. Providing data management services has been difficult for many librarians working in academic libraries, but new skills enabled them to handle the flow of information in the arena of Information Communication Technology (ICT). Several academic librarians have argued that their institutions have not

trained them in data management services, but they still perform their jobs wholeheartedly. Taking into consideration the benefit of research data management services, academic libraries can situate themselves in the RDM landscape so that they can make strategic decisions, support RDM development, and work with those parties outside of the library to address emerging research needs. Librarians are masters in research data management services. Let them know what is to be organized and in which ways. Research and Data Management services are key factors in academic libraries; stakeholders should consider them. Academic Libraries and data centers are key players in Research Data Management services worldwide to support their researchers in funding projects and grant them access to open research data.

Donato Diorio, Founder and principal of DataZ, rightly said, "Without a systematic way to start and keep data clean, bad data will happen."

School Libraries in Developing Countries: Where does Pakistan Stands

The Potohar news, September 25, 2021

School is the 2nd place after mother's lap, where children grow and learn the best life lessons. It has a positive impact on children's minds. Once a child enrolls in the school, they will never look back; schools are where children start thinking and planning. Every school offers a classroom, labs, playgrounds, canteen, and so many other facilities, but the role of the school library is extremely a place where children grow and stimulate their brains with positive thinking. School libraries have a paramount role in learning and teaching activities, and they act as an information hub and an innovation center. The School library is where sustaining literacy, lifelong learning, and self-education are nurtured and taught into children's brains. School libraries are sources of children's knowledge-building, problem-solving, and information literacy skills development. It is a place that provides opportunities for collaborative learning, creativity, and brain-building. It is a great source of the school curriculum and enhances teachers' professional development materials. According to the International Federation of Library Associations (IFLA) Report (2018), Libraries are key to achieving sustainable development goals. It is the responsibility of governments to put effective and efficient structures that are helpful for timely and quality information.

World school libraries face numerous challenges that must be addressed with adequate resources. School libraries are centers for quality education, but developing countries are deprived of such facilities for many reasons. One such reason is the government's inability to invest in developing and managing effective school libraries. All developing countries face numerous challenges like lack of funding, inadequate staffing, unavailability of libraries, etc; the problems of school libraries in Pakistan are inapplicable. Though schools in cities have been granted few libraries, most urban schools still need libraries. Even many schools in rural areas of different provinces still need their buildings. According to the Finance Education Report 2020, 172.5 thousand functional primary schools had 522.4 thousand corresponding teachers from classes 1-5. The status of Middle schools recorded was 46.7 thousand middle institutes, with 448.1 thousand employed teachers in the country during 2017-18. It has also been observed that during the academic year 2017-18, a total of 31.4 thousand secondary schools were functional, with 563.3 thousand teachers working in the whole country, but coming to the ratio of libraries was recorded as zero.

Deprivations of libraries in Pakistani schools are too many. Still, several challenges that students in different provinces are facing inadequate staff and funding, lack of interest of Government and teachers in schools, unavailability of the library within the school, inadequate infrastructure and equipment, low level of information tools, non-availability of regular funds, inadequate space for books, less trained staff, lack of reading material and other resources, poor policy guideline. As a result of the scarcity of school libraries, if these issues were addressed properly, it would be easier for developing countries, particularly, to reach their desired objectives of linking with students at the school level for the development of a knowledge-based economy. Let us think about it.

Libraries: A Gateway to Knowledge

The Pakistan observer, September 14, 2021

Libraries play a fundamental role in society and guarantee access to knowledge. Libraries are gateways to knowledge and culture; their function can never be confined to four walls. Resources and services in the libraries create learning opportunities. It supports the literacy of the masses and educates them in shaping new ideas to nourish an innovative society. Libraries guarantee authentic records of knowledge created by past generations and preserve it for forthcoming generations. It is said that a world with libraries can only advance research and human understanding. Libraries are excellent sources of transforming knowledge. Libraries balance protecting authors' rights and safeguarding the broader public interest. In other words, libraries are synonymous with education and offer learning opportunities to help the masses in economic, social, and cultural development. They uplift marginalized people and ensure that libraries continue to access knowledge, earnings, and new ideas. In the management of Collection Development, the role of libraries is mind-blowing. It helps the readers in collecting the right book for a particular community.

Libraries purchase books, record them, and organize them for dissemination to the general public. It ensures the community the longevity of the volume for future use. In this age of the digital arena, libraries not only secure ownership of digital content but also store it on a local server and make it accessible to a targeted community. Traditionally and electronically, libraries' vision is to offer the right book to the right reader at the right time policy. The second example of library paradigms is the collection development and engagement in the publishing process. Libraries of today's world are places of content presentation, management, and distribution, and they publish a large amount of content. Beyond archiving, libraries are excellent sources of mediation, such as Stanford University's High-wire press, Project-muse of Johns Hopkins University, etc. These are excellent sources of robust distribution services. Libraries are the trustees of cultural heritage and preservation. Libraries are a stimulus to share and reuse information, and knowledge comes in many guises to preserve our cultural heritage.

This heritage will be kept for future generations. It also demonstrates one of the essential functions of the library. Many libraries deal with historical collections that are difficult to find elsewhere. If libraries can not preserve these historical documents, we cannot transform these documents for our forthcoming generations. In information literacy services, the role of libraries is commendable. It helps people use library resources effectively through direct structured education activities. Exploring library resources has become a daunting task for the students. New teaching and learning methods have emerged in users' instructional needs as the learning environment has changed readers' tastes since the advent of advanced technology. Ultimately, information literacy has become intertwined with reshaping the educational experience. Another excellent example of libraries is the opportunities for mass digitization. The internet has become a great source of knowledge, and tremendous opportunities have been created in library services.

People are converting the old traditional knowledge into digital applications on a large scale. Learning has become a widespread and powerful tool in the internet age. Libraries are driving access to knowledge in the 21st Century. Now, the question arises as to why libraries in the 21st Century are different from conventional setups. The answer is simple; it is a fact that computing and telecommunication technology advances revolutionize the 21st Century. The Internet age has witnessed a tremendous increase in information management and transmission of knowledge. To detect the improved version of knowledge delivery, libraries are accurate sources of transmitting

knowledge. Furthermore, information and data are synonymous terms that can be stored in databases and accessed online. Library websites are now granting access to material housed in libraries.

Conventional libraries have been converted into hybrid ones, which ensure people find subject material in printed and electronic formats. In short, libraries are wisdom houses for knowledge seekers.

Innovative Ideas in Academic Libraries

The Potohar News,September 4, 2021

In the traditional setup, libraries were considered physical buildings for housing collections of printed items like books, journals, magazines, etc. In today's world, we see drastic changes in how libraries are. The present library culture has not confined itself to the four walls and ultimately has broken all barriers with the advent of advanced technologies. Users are now able to access information remotely through digital and virtual libraries. Automated Libraries, Hybrid Libraries, Digital Libraries, Virtual Libraries, and Library 2.0 are a few names for libraries in the current arena. Now, libraries follow the philosophy of everywhere and anytime information centers. Libraries of today's age are so active, unlike in the past. It has no barriers to the patterns for presenting the best breed and flexible system. Unlike traditional libraries, modern libraries present a captivating and charming atmosphere, bearing in mind the concept of learning commons. Presently, libraries are renovating their spaces and offering connectivity and outlet access. Many libraries offer coffee Cafe bars and entertainment facilities. Some are even presenting academic and Oscar award-winning movies to their patrons. In short, the information seeker views the libraries as their second home owing to its conducive environment and services offered in the digital age.

The birth of technology has reshaped libraries' services and brought positive changes in information acquisition, storage and organization to render quality services to its patrons. The following are some of the emerging trends in 21st-Century library spaces that can be used to disseminate information on a broader spectrum. Though some are highly affected, most are self-services-oriented techniques involving technology like computers, laptops, smartphones, PDAs, MP3s, etc. Above all, the internet plays a tremendous role in accessing extensive information. Online Public Access Catalogue (OPAC) is a prodigious tool for locating library material. This has converted traditional catalog cards into modern information metadata for retrieval. Some OPACs of modern libraries can also be accessed via mobile technologies to find desired material without wasting time. Personal space/My Library is another innovative technology that allows patrons to manage their personalized accounts with custom-made collections. Here, users can set and manage their profile with ample services like reserving items, receiving alerts, and checking interlibrary loan requests. Users can also renew borrowed items and document delivery requests. Short Message Service (SMS) notification: This is the most substantial technology deployed in modern libraries to keep users up-to-date with the latest information like videos, audio files, images, etc. It can also alert patrons regarding outstanding fees, interlibrary loans, renewal of library items, new arrivals in the library, etc. Some other tools deployed for promoting library services are social media networks, which can be utilized to reach out to patrons who cannot visit physically. With the help of social media, a librarian can engage patrons through different modes of social media, such as WhatsApp, IMO, and other web applications, such as Twitter, Facebook, and Pinterest.

Another good tool for academic libraries is Quick Response Codes (QR). This is helpful for users to access desired websites. QR codes contain information about an item, which helps users get access through smartphone cameras for decoding information with the help of scanned images. Modern libraries also use online reference services; under these services, an overwhelming number of inquiries can be received through the phone and chat to help the customer with opening hours, specific books and titles, etc. Other informative tools include Video on Demand (VOD) and Multicast Video on Demand (MVOD), which allow patrons to run video on their devices and mobile phones. These services can be utilized with the help of 3G/4G technologies, Wi-Fi, etc. This can help the patron search for access points such as the video's title, creator's name, etc. Today's libraries offer extensive

information on their websites to reach out to patrons. Some good examples are Cascading style sheets (CSS) and Auto-Detect Reformat software (ADR), which can help users reformat their websites on tablets and mobile phones. Library websites are designed for both desktops and mobile phones. Library of our ages also offers mailing lists, a standard information dissemination method. This method helps librarians to reach out to patrons without boundaries. Librarians share important information with a larger audience to fulfill their demands easily. These innovative information dissemination tools in academic libraries will bring positive changes and reach patrons who need help physically visiting the library.

Camel Library Movement in Pakistan

July 27, 2021

Mobile libraries are an old concept that has almost lost relevance in this digital age. Still, the ongoing pandemic has once again brought its utility, especially for regions that were not well connected, and people had to make extra effort to go to schools and learn. Various names are used for mobile libraries, like libraries on the vehicle, wagon libraries, traveling libraries, book auto service, etc. But here, we are focussing on the mobile library on a camel. This innovative idea was started in the less developed province of Pakistan named Baluchistan. Many schools are closed in the region due to ongoing pandemics, and children are deprived of readings in such circumstances. The Principal of Zubaida Jalal Girls High School, Rahima Jalal, and the Pakistani minister of Defence Production, Zubaida Jalal, thought that if children couldn't go to school/libraries, why not take the books to them? The idea is an indigenous movement in the field of libraries, which was experienced earlier as a successful project. Top global newspapers like the Guardian, the Hindu (India), Al-Jazeera TV, and much more covered this successful story. Still, they have yet to attempt to write an article on this particular issue. It has been argued that mobile library services are an educational lifeline for students around the globe, particularly for the children of Balochistan who live in marginalized areas.

This pandemic has brought tremendous challenges for the people of Pakistan. The children in all provinces are losing their intellectual capabilities. Under these circumstances, the camel mobile library is a blessing for the region that benefits from it. George Bernard Shaw rightly said, "Progress is impossible without change; those who cannot change their minds cannot change anything." Raheema Jalal, Principal of a High School in Balochistan, shares lifelong services with the people of Balochistan. Balochistan is one of the most impoverished provinces of Pakistan. It has been blighted by separatist insurgency for the past two decades, with the lowest female literacy rate of 24% and 56% male in the world. The sacrifices in the marginalized regions, exclusively the initiative of the camel library, are undoubtedly a good step towards reading growth.

According to Rahima Jalal, the idea was picked from Ethiopia and the Mongol Camel Library in the Gobi Desert of Mongolia, where children often needed access to the physical library where books were entirely inaccessible. Children often get an education out of playing with dirt and pebbles in a place where books are almost unreachable. Dashondog Jamba, a publisher and translator, traveled more than 50,000 miles through the arid region and shared colourful books with children. Rahima Jalal has articulated, "It suits our lonely, distant, and rough terrains. We have received an enormous response that we were not expecting."

Originally, the idea was started in 1978 by Dr. Juanita Baker, an American citizen living in Pakistan. As there were no children's libraries, this double-decker bus won everyone's hearts. It was symbolic of the children's library movement in Pakistan. One famous mobile library is the Alif Laila Book Bus Society in Lahore, where books were operated with mobile rickshaw libraries in the city. With the help of the non-profit Alif Laila Book Bus Society, it has established more than 7,000 mobile libraries across Pakistan, with over 1.5 million books donated in the past four decades. When schools and libraries were closed during a pandemic, people aspired to have some reading stuff but couldn't find it in such a situation, Camel Library proved itself to be a mercy for the people of Balochistan in the suburban areas. The exciting thing is the Camel, which carries the weight of books named Roshan. Initially, few villages in Balochistan were covered.

It is said that the Camel mobile library supplies books on Friday, Saturday, and Sunday, covering three different villages every week. It supplies books for two hours between 4 p.m. and 6 p.m. Children choose the books they like and return them after a week. It has been argued that children are excited and interested in reading and borrowing books from the Camel Library. Many children benefit from these fiction and non-fiction books in Urdu and English. The mission for the Camel Library is yet to be confined to a few villages of Ketch, but it is opined that the project will be expanded to other towns as soon as possible. Pakistan's government, particularly Balochistan, does not invest in education and libraries. They should encourage such movements throughout the country. The Government of Pakistan should follow the nice saying of Swami Vivekananda: "If the poor boy cannot come to education, education must go to him.

Librarianship a Satisfying Career, not merely a Job

Potohar News, July 17, 2021

Library and Information Sciences is a branch of academic disciplines that generally deals with collection, organization, and information regulations, whether in physical or digital formats. It is one of the sacred professions that helps scholars locate and trace the right information. It brings changes through passionate knowledge. The profession is not only creating jobs but also satisfying careers. Librarians always share deep satisfaction with what they do. People are adopting it for career building, dignity, and helping humanity trace accurate information. The American Library Association surveyed librarianship. It has resulted in 85% of people being interested in adopting a professional course that helps them find careers. World scholars feel immense pleasure surrounding books like fish in the water. Library and information science offer a career full of adventures, interest, and knowledge-based arguments. People who acquire degrees in librarianship passionately have the sense of helping the humanities by proposing knowledge. These professions love people who desire to learn and want an impact on society.
In a recent interview with Radio Pakistan, people argued that Library Science is a mere profession with minor knowledge, and librarians spend 2-6 years picking and keeping a book on the shelves. The host asked whether librarianship has any scope except being in libraries. My answer was Yes; it has many folded careers like academic librarianship, record management, special collections, and archiving careers. Some other careers librarians offer is Data Curation, Database Development, Administration, Digital librarianship, Digital Youth, Information Architecture Taxonomy, knowledge organization, Law Librarianship, Public Librarianship, Special and Corporate Librarianship, and many more. The pathways you may choose in the field of librarianship.

The advent of advanced technology offers diverse careers in librarianship. Some prominent are archival and special collection librarians, intelligence analysts, children's librarians, electronic resource librarians, information officers, internet trainers, information architects, knowledge management specialists, learning resource center librarians, media specialists, rare book curators, reference librarians, research analyst, publishing manager, programme consultant, semantic modeler, taxonomist, urban branch manager, youth services librarian, web content strategist, university library director and subject specialist librarians, etc.

The Library Science field encompasses carriers in different types and disciplines. A career in this field can be tailored to fit any goals you have for your professional career. Pursuing a degree in Librarianship enables you to be information savvy and takes your passion for information. As a strategic asset for an organization, ranging from non-profit corporations to the public sector, there is a wide array of careers in library science. One will acquire a dream job after pursuing a BS, MS, and Ph. D. in librarianship. However, it focuses more on working with information and scholarly works. The second name for library science is information science. It is presumed that a person with an information science and library degree will love working with people. Being a part of a highly dynamic team, today's librarians dedicatedly involve themselves by turning technology into solutions and actionable results that excel them in library science careers. To contribute to the common good, a career in information and library science may also be a good fit if one is passionate about knowledge sharing. Modern-age librarians are transforming information into action. In this role, Librarians help the knowledgeable research team find the right information at the right time. In support of life circumstances, library professionals often find that they can shape their careers while working

remotely, on a part-time or project basis. Library Science deals with information skills that are highly adaptable and open doors into almost any type of work setting you can imagine.

Many questions arise when coming into the field of Library Science for careers. Some questions for new students' information that could help them either opt or quit: (1) Do you want to work with people, systems, technology, or data? How do you feel about working in the environment of a book? Do you thrive in a team or a more solitary environment? Are you familiar with routine work and changing project work? If you do so, you should come forward to choose your career in librarianship. The universe of information and library science careers offers answers to these questions wholeheartedly. Work in the library field will demonstrate a promising career if you are ready to face changes in information diffusion. The sole aim of librarianship is to help humanity with scholarly knowledge while sharing the desired knowledge without wasting their time. In this age of information technology, library services have been diverted into many shapes. Neil Gaiman rightly said, "Google can bring you back 100,000 answers. A librarian can bring you back the right one."

Concept of Street Libraries in Pakistan

Potohar News, July 3, 2021

Australia is one of the most famous places for street libraries; more than 5000 street libraries were established by the end of 2020. The general manager of street libraries in Australia claimed that the number of street libraries is increasing steadily from time to time. Each street has its library in its front yard. Everyone living in the street can access them and share the joys of reading with their neighbors. According to the Australian Government, Street libraries are a beautiful home for books. It is a window into the mind of a community. In street libraries, books come and go; there is no need to check them in or out. People can pick and return the book of interest when it is done. Street libraries are a great symbol of trust hope, and a source of literary happiness.

The circle of Street Libraries in Pakistan is expanding gradually. Lahore was once a hub of street libraries but lasted only briefly. These libraries were great sources of income for the person who ought to manage them. Modern street libraries began when the ex-chief secretary of Karachi established the first on December 25, 2019. The event occurred on the 143rd birthday anniversary of Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah. The purpose of the street library was to pay a full tribute to the country's founding members. The idea of the street library was borrowed from Germany and the Australian Government in order to promote the culture of reading so that our young generation will learn the value of books. Both these countries have established libraries in cafe bars and trains to access material and quench the readers' thirst. On this auspicious opening ceremony of the street library, the then Commissioner of Karachi, Mr. Iftikhar Ali Shallwani, expressed that we strive to promote reading habits in this digital information age. He also articulated that Google can give us information but not knowledge. Knowledge can only be acquired through the library culture, and street libraries will play a role in helping the general masses.

Initially, 600 books in English and Urdu were placed covering literature, science, and different areas. Fiction and non-fiction books were also placed for general readers. The motto of street libraries was designed on the policy of taking a book and leaving a book. The main mission of such street libraries was to foster the love of reading among the masses. There is no staff or librarian at this library because the city administrator wants the people to own the library. However, a guard has been hired to look into security reasons. The chief commissioner also expressed that he will expand the street libraries into 41 cities of Sindh and enhance the number in six districts under his supervision. He has had the view that after a rousing response from the public and authors. The government of Karachi will grant more funding to the street and public libraries to inculcate reading habits.

The second library was established in Lyari on August 14, 2020, and pledged to expand the initiative in South District Municipal Corporations. In the inauguration of the Second Street Library in Karachi, the Deputy commissioner proclaimed that he would love to increase the number of street libraries for ordinary citizens. One can access books and similar reading material. He also argued that other libraries would be established in North Nazimabad, Malir, etc. Underlining the significance of street libraries in Karachi, DC, remarked that books still have great value despite the widespread prevalence of the internet. He insisted that the internet is not a substitute for books to be replaced. He opined that the internet gives you information, but books give you actual knowledge in the libraries.

Keeping alive the traditions of Street Libraries in Pakistan, another good initiative took place in Skardu, Gilgit Baltistan. The then Deputy Commissioner established a street library in the busy chowk. He expressed that with the help of the Municipal Administrator, the number of street libraries

will be expanded to other cities of Gilgit Baltistan. The library is designed as an open space where one can freely read the books of one's choice.

Street Libraries are excellent sources of learning. There are no hard and fast rules for the street libraries; people can access these libraries 24/7. A positive gesture of street libraries will stimulate reading habits in ordinary citizens and cater to young slots' information literacy services. The Government of Pakistan may expand these initiatives to larger cities in different provinces. A stipulated budget is, however, required to make the street libraries more productive and powerful.

Social and Research Networking for Scholars

Potohar News, May 29, 2021

Social networking and research networking are both sides of the same coin. In human endeavours, social networking and social connecting play an essential role. People ponder when they come across the latest insights relevant to their field. Social networking can connect people and share social status, ideologies, and professional news. For the last few decades, scholars have endeavoured to design a platform that gives enough information and is helpful for professional growth. Gone are the days when people were looking for chit-chat with foreigners to excel in their language skills. Now, people are searching for sober and ethical websites that are helpful/informative and have educated insights that help them grow their knowledge in more sophisticated ways.

Educated persons, scholars and intellectual readers are switching their Facebook accounts to informative websites. They are searching for websites that help them groom themselves in positive ways. Building and sustaining relevant relationships with studious readers make them more humanistic, and this term is called "Human Networking." The new approach of research networking has made people more comfortable and feasible in connecting with peers, colleagues, and professionals, which could help them share and disseminate new ideas and information to relevant people. Scholarly networking sites have brought tremendous changes in human psychology. They share literary works with scholars worldwide and help academics hook up and share scholarly works to grow together.

A few noteworthy academic websites could be envisaged as the most appropriate for flying and growing together. Academia.edu is one of the most reliable and scholarly networks; Richard Price established it in the middle of 2008. This website is dedicated to academic work, allowing users to create a personal profile to exchange messages and relevant information with peers, colleagues, and analysts for feedback. You can upload papers, news, and views to the appropriate professional you followed or follow you in connection. One can alert oneself by setting notification alerts upon uploading or publishing on their follow-up list. Research Gate is another effort of Ijad Madish and a few other researchers; it was founded in 2008. An academic, social researchers' network is an excellent tool to connect scholars with the same goals. It is a valuable site for journal articles, conference papers, posters and information. It has analytics features enabling users to get published research feedback. It also shows the number of times that readers and citation tools read along with Digital Object Identifier (DOI). The best feature of this website is to share quality knowledge and be supportive of peers and professional colleagues. It is a valuable tool for collaborative research and enhances quality work. Another excellent example of research networking is Penprofile; social networking fosters global research among academic scholars, students, and educational organizations to facilitate the enormous diffusion of knowledge growth and development.

It is admirable for its productive knowledge and robust built-in features/sections. Organizations and individual profiles are required for writing opportunities, calls for papers, conferences, and much more, and they are available here; one can view them by visiting www.penprofile.com. Some other prominent social and research networking are LinkedIn and Google Scholars. LinkedIn is a social networking platform where individuals and companies come together for employment opportunities, skills acquisition, knowledge sharing, etc. This forum assists in sharing knowledge and working relationships. It was founded in 2002 and can be operated from a phone and a website. Google Scholar is dedicated to scholarly work such as articles, books, posters, etc. It has a multidimensional search engine. It helps users find scholarly works of academia, faculty, and most productive authors here;

one thing should be considered: sometimes, it can not give direct access to articles in paid databases following copyright rules.

Nevertheless, it deals with all kinds of research papers. It is mind-blowing for professional societies, university repositories, institutional libraries, and other websites, particularly scholarly works. One can create a profile by having a Gmail and Google account. One can also import citations in different styles like Chicago, MLA, Harvard, or via Zotero, Mendeley, etc. It can also be utilized for metrics analysis and quickly gauge the visibility of recent articles. If one can set an alert for most dynamic authors, they can retrieve the latest articles by uploading them. One can find this by searching google.com. In a nutshell, research and social networking are the most dynamic aspects of human life. Create an account today and get access to extensive knowledge without any ambiguity.

Librarian Journey from Research Support to Research Partner

Baghi TV, May 11, 2021[3]

Academic Libraries are demonstrating their values from research support services to the research partnership. In the past, librarians were confined to the four walls of libraries. Today's librarians are involved with research faculty in the research journey of academic libraries. This collaboration is resulting in their value as co-authorship. Such partnership increases its value and helps them in its emerging role of embedded librarianship. Collaborative research with faculty members is one possible way to demonstrate the alignment of the library with the institutional mission. Involving them with faculty members in research activities helps them in improving skills. Academic librarianship has now been demonstrated as embedded librarianship. Such a role helps them in institutional research output. The librarians have made a significant contribution to the research partnership.

The innovative role of librarians in the sustained state of providing their contributions to the academic mission has emerged as the next part of academia's changing perspective and student learning activities. The modern day's embedded librarianship has proved to be a recommended approach to showcase the value of academic librarians outside the library wall. The Education Advisory Board (EAB) recommends a new role for librarians to facilitate their faculty members in the new courses and research teams. The question, however, arises in mind. How does the library contribute to faculty research productivity or tenure and promotion decisions? Librarian's role from research supporters is now changing to research partners.

In this role, Librarians have been involved in placing, inserting and non-library departments to disseminate, organize and preserve library material actively. Besides this, librarians are now mediating in the visibility and management of institutional affairs. In identifying the most appropriate combination of database searching, librarians become more prominent because they know how to explore them for literature review. In the future scenario of librarians, it will be increasingly important for working librarians to actively participate in institutional goals beyond historical core library services, information literacy, collection development, and reference services that still adhere to traditional library services.

The current role of librarianship is based on embedded librarianship and liaison programmes. This demonstrative activity can illustrate how librarians become more visible and integrated with faculty members to achieve institutional goals. The last few decades have brought fundamental changes regarding research in a different discipline. Collaborative research is conducted among diverse disciplines, institutions, and countries. To master the essential tools for research activities, researchers and librarians face numerous challenges in this era of technology. There are critical challenges for academia in facilitating research and libraries. In such circumstances, academia worldwide prepares a team to add new values to its research. Academic institutions want librarians to answer the question: How do librarians add value to the research process to achieve their mission and goals? A close relationship between librarians and research can be beneficial to the work of both. Librarians have sound knowledge when reviewing the latest research; moreover, faculty always have good writing skills, but finding quality research was only possible with librarians' help. Librarians know which is the best and most relevant research that could fulfil their scholars' research needs.

[3] ,https://en.baaghitv.com/librarian-journey-from-research-support-to-research-partner

Besides this, librarians should keep researchers abreast with more excellent knowledge and help them browse quality research. When the librarians perform their routine work in a traditional setup, they will never grow in their respective organizations. Librarians should come out of their traditional services and actively participate in activities beyond conventional services. In this case, their role should not be passive. They should promote their learning capabilities regarding the new tools, which are highly helpful in the growth of organizations' research. Many librarians have been engaged in Plagiarism software; this is undoubtedly a good gesture for the editorial team of the organization, but learning more tools will make them more capable by involving them in research tools.

Modern-day librarians are well-prepared for organizational changes. They should learn new tools and skills to facilitate their research. Many statistical software like Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS), Statistical Analysis Software (SAS), STATA, etc. The new context of academia shows excellent potential for the librarian's expertise. In order to take on new roles, they should adopt new ways of working. Librarians should think beyond the four walls of their libraries. Outside the library services, they should engage in research activities; this will help them get closer to the authority and bring the librarian closer to the users.

International Association of School Librarianship

Why School Libraries are neglected in Pakistan

IASL, April 2021

A school library is one of the libraries that was established for children in primary and secondary education. In other words, a school library is a part of a school where a collection of books, magazines, newspapers and other printed and non-printed materials are kept for the use of students and teachers. Each library has its fundamental principles, but common goals for all libraries are acquiring, organizing, and disseminating information for easy access. Libraries are proven to be the repository of knowledge and cultural heritage; they are helpful elements in disseminating information to clients on the effective utilization of libraries for better academic performance. School libraries are excellent sources for the intellectual growth of students.

Problems of Education in Pakistan & Solution:

Source: https://blueskyconsultancy.com.pk/problems-of-education-in-pakistan-solution/

Establishing libraries at the school level must be improved in developing countries, including Pakistan. Education is the fundamental right of all citizens, and it is safeguarded in the constitution of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan. Still, the literacy rate at the school level in Pakistan is low compared to other South Asian countries. School education covers pre-school, primary, middle, secondary, and higher secondary schools.

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Source:https://iclnpakistan.blogspot.com/2018/09/school-library-activity-in-government.html

School Library Activities in Pakistan:

As per the mandatory rules of educational institutions in Pakistan at the public or private level, there should be a building for library purposes on school premises that should serve the school's students and teachers. Federal Board of Intermediate and Secondary Education Act of 1975 says that there should be accommodation for a library in school buildings. All schools should have a well-stocked library, some rules have also been formulated that with the establishment of the first year of school, a sum of Rs.25000 should be spent on library collection and it should be increased up to Rs.5000 each year with an adequate number of stock like books, newspapers and periodicals. A library assistant will look after the libraries; they must have a diploma or certificate in library sciences. School libraries aim to intensify quality education in schools by providing adequate facilities like chairs, tables, textbooks and qualified library staff for better performance and quality education. Unfortunately, 80% of schools in Pakistan do not have library buildings. Why are School libraries in Pakistan neglected compared to other developing countries? Here are some common problems :

There needs to be proper attention from the government side. Teachers need to take an interest in encouraging students to use libraries for intellectual growth. Mostly, schools in Pakistan rely more on textbooks and memory-based learning that do not require libraries. Teachers are spending library budgets on other items. School libraries are the last option for teachers in Pakistan. Purchasing the books for school libraries is regarded as a contingency. Books found in libraries are in terrible condition and do not fulfill students’ needs as per the syllabus. Books are kept in locked cupboards, and students must be granted access. Teachers are open to accepting responsibilities in case of loss of books. School libraries are an important segment in students' intellectual growth, and it is perceived "at the heart of the school's resources for learning." The education ministry, intermediate boards, school administrations, and stakeholders should come forward and envisage school libraries as a hub of actual knowledge.

Internet-influenced Reading Habits

Pakistan Observer, April 12, 2021

Reading is one of the oldest habits of human civilization and has remained the passion of the most extraordinary personalities. It is a springboard for any literacy programme. It is a source of conscious learning and is the art of interpreting printed and written words. Reading is a source of accurate information, attitudes, judgments, beliefs, and morals. A person who reads books or magazines for thorough learning always finds solutions to their problems. There is a severe decline in reading culture. Students of old age mainly relied on reading books. Gone are the days when libraries were full of intellectual readers.

Libraries were considered to be places of creative thinking in reading. Reading culture's importance cannot be overemphasized for many reasons because, without reading, neither a person nor academic success can be achieved. Reading is an aid to language development, socialization and civilization. Without reading, no society can grow in the right direction. Reading is essential for any society because, with reading, we can learn effective communication and survive in the environment where we dwell. The development of reading skills is an essential skill for all ages of society. To teach the reading culture to children, one should teach reading tactics to them.

Pakistani parents, teachers, and even students rely more on fate than reading for success. Pakistani students need help in developing a good reading culture. Some noteworthy examples are that we need libraries at the school level, the scarcity of quality books in the libraries, the lack of interest of parents and teachers in children's readings, innovative digital technologies, and proper training for books by librarians and teachers. Among them, the internet has badly violated the interest of our young slots. However, the internet is a worldwide communication network controlled by an approved protocol. The internet is the source of an unlimited wealth of information.

It can be accessed easily for unencumbered resources. It is a veritable tool for learning, teaching, and research activities, but reading culture has been severely threatened due to this technological innovation. This technology misleads Pakistan's teenagers and secondary school students in the wrong direction. We know that technology is taking steady control over individual lives. Our society's teenage students spend more time on the internet than studying books and watching informative videos. The Pub G game has intoxicated our young generation badly, and they spend more time researching on the internet. Students of today's age are playing with funky handsets, chatting with friends, using non-stop short messages, and consuming a lot of time on video gaming, Facebook, Instagram, WhatsApp, etc. Libraries are the most significant sources of reading and archaic ideas.

Students ought to be directed there instead of being allowed to roam inside the schools and colleges. The internet has caused a declining reading culture in Pakistan, and mobile phones highly affect young students. Pakistan Telecommunication Authority should implement a vital check on vulgar websites that capture students' minds to entertainment rather than reading. Although the reading culture has increased, not decreased, smartphones have addicted our young generation, and their memories have been damaged by the fastest internet packages being introduced in Pakistan. Government and private institutions should ban smartphones from being used inside institutions. Computer labs can be used with strict monitoring policies, and entertainment sites should be fully prohibited to prevent young slots from intoxicating teenagers. Parents should not allow their kids to use their mobile phones with internet facilities. The internet can only be utilized to do their assignments, to communicate with their teachers, etc. A law should also stipulate the age limit for using internet sites that affect our young students' reading culture. Remember! A person who learns

quickly from the internet will forget soon. The internet is a fashion for short learning memories. It defects your brain for long hours. It damages health, eyesight and brain memory. Using the internet is suitable for mature people rather than for young generations.

Role of Social Media in Research Productivity

Baghi TV May 4, 2021

Online tools permit users to communicate with one another in order to share information, knowledge, and opinions; this mode of communication is called Social Media. Modern-day scholars intertwine research and Social Media. People often share their research for outreach. Modern-day social networking is an excellent source for scholars. They share their published works with their fellow professionals to gain more recognition in their respective fields. In the past, research was limited to the cupboard and was preserved in the lock, but modern-day research is spreading like waves once uploaded; researchers are getting endorsements for their published research. Gone are the days when the research was limited to a few people; now, people get inspiration from the published work of their colleagues and acquaintances. Technology savvy is believed to be spending over 2 hours on social media and becoming aware of what others share.

Scholars of today's age are coming close together with subject specialists in their respective fields. This can help them know the modern trends that are happening. People of common interests share published work and get comments on research via social media. This can help them to know their weaknesses and vital components, sometimes negative comments and insights from experts aware of them to address them in forthcoming papers. Despite the enormous advantages of social media in research, such as community outreach, it has also reshaped researchers' brains to share excellent and fruitful ideas; otherwise, they may get targeted by a substantial audience. Social Media is a user-driven platform encouraging users to diffuse effective content to a wider audience and interact with them for free. It provides dynamic features that enable users to have a two-way relationship. Social Media has been classified into six broader types: sharing sites, blogs/micro-blogging, virtual online communities, social networking sites (SNS), social bookmarking sites, and virtual worlds. The present studies have proved that WhatsApp is the most comprehensive platform, followed by Facebook and Twitter.

Research blogs like Academia, Research Gate, Questia, Google Scholar, and Slide-share are notable scholarly projects that engage scholars on larger scales and grant them access to information. These sites have extensively been utilized for collaborative learning and information dissemination. Social Media channels are helpful tools for social engagement and sharing of viral trust. Integrating Social Media into different communication campaigns like civil society, government, and other professionals would be meaningful in leveraging social dynamics and networks to encourage participation and conversation by spreading the key messages for positive decision-making.

Social Media is based on sharing and caring principles and enhances individuals' research productivity, whether it's a book, review, book chapter, journal publication, conference proceedings, or patent produced by them.

People who share research productivity through Social Media will get recognition and high citations. Those who connect with Social Media will get enormous information without payment. In Social Media like Facebook, a researcher can contact the authors directly and request them to grant access to the articles /chapters in their time of need. Once a paper is shared on Social Media, it can reach millions. People seek quality research and research on Social Media and access them to obtain positive ideas. A paper shared on Social Media could increase the readership. Sometimes, people violate the authors' copyright rules without an agreement, but most authors share their paid content on Social Media to attract readership. Sharing free content on Social Media grasps reader attention on a large scale.

Social Media is a significant asset for collaborative research. One who desires to get more readership will share their published study. The research output in the research environment must be balanced.

Researchers' moral responsibility is to share their work through a different medium to reach the audience of their fields. The prime purpose of research is to share it with a knowledge seeker. Using Social Media as a research-sharing platform could help both knowledge seekers and providers.

Deployment of 5G Technologies in Library Services

Pakistan Observer, March 13, 2021

5G stands for fifth-generation cellular communication. The term G has been used to generate cellular device communication technology. The 1st generation of cellular was introduced in 1980 as wireless cellular technology. Initially, Mobile Telecommunications was known as analogue telecommunication. The First Generation (1G) technology used voice signals and analogue cellular phones. In 2nd generation (2G) technology introduced in Finland by Radiolinja in 1991, Global System for Mobile Communications(GSM) was introduced as a global mobile communication system. The 3G technology was brought into use in the mid-2000s. This was a High-Speed downlink Packet Access (HSDPA). Initially, the speed of 3G was 42Mbits/s downlink and 84Mbits/s. A telephony communication protocol in high-speed packet access was used; later, 3.5, turbo G and 3G+ were utilized as network-based Mobile Telecommunication Systems (UMTS) with higher-speed data transfers.

The industry began looking to data-optimized 4th G technologies up to 10-fold over existing 3G Technology. 4G was used for high-quality audio/video streaming and was based on eliminating circuit switching. It was introduced in Scandinavia by Telia Sonera. Verizon Communication Inc. is a multinational company based in America. In the mid of 2018, a trial of 5G was run successfully in different markets as technology evolves from time to time and customers use it in vast arrays of services.

5G has been linked with big data, Internet of Things (IoT) broadband and mobile communication and has almost been implemented in 11 Markets in the USA. An annual report of Pakistan Telecommunication Authority **(**PTA) 2020 argues that a new road map will be developed to launch 5G technology in the middle of 2022. This will help Pakistani citizens to use mobiles at the fastest speed. It will also bring a positive change in library services. A question arises as to why mobile devices could be launched in library services. The evolving technology has been transformed into new shapes and is useful for internet savvy.

The present generation is highly intoxicated, and usually, they use different devices for communications to connect world states. Phones, Cell Phones, Tablets, iPods, iPads, and MP3 players are a few notable examples. The libraries convert from a traditional setup to modern information networks to connect users with information through the World Wide Web (WWW) and Mobile devices. Today's age is the age of Information Technology. Digital Technology has provided the fastest access to information, allowing libraries to rethink and remodel their services by adopting technological changes. The mobile phone has become an essential part of our lives. It is a source of communication and connects the world with information via the internet. In such a changing scenario, mobile technology will be a massive help for libraries in providing user-oriented services to users. Embedding mobile technology in library services will help the users in catering handsome stuff. Mobile networks have become more reliable and commendable sources for accessing the digital content that exists in libraries.

University libraries are the hub of research activities, and implementing 5G technology will help researchers obtain digital resources. In almost all developed countries, 5G technology is embedded in library services as part of smart library projects. The 5G is one of the most advanced communication protocols and mobile internet hotspots for the fastest communication of library users with electronic resources. In modern innovative smart libraries, China has already combined 5G with cloud computing, big data, information communication, etc. 5 G-based smart libraries create a new height for library and Internet Savvy. This will provide a comfortable environment and convenient

ways for library users. The 5G will double the research output of Pakistani students. To break the limitations of traditional libraries, advanced 5G communication technology will enhance Pakistan's research output in different fields. The 5G is an innovative design of a smart library. In developed countries like the US, China, and Britain, the 5G Chip has been introduced and runs successfully. However, many developing countries like Pakistan are still vigorously planning for 5G network-based stations. 2023 was a ray of hope for Pakistani students and would positively change internet speed. 5th generation (5G) Technology is an inevitable development. Connecting Libraries with 5G technology will foster a positive change for common Pakistani inclusively students.

Digital Literacy Skills in Pakistani Option for Librarians

Pakistan Observer, February 9, 2021

Information Communication Technologies (ICTs) brought an enormous revolution in our daily life. Individuals' behaviour has wholly been changed in education, health, agriculture, industries, etc. Mobile phones, computers and the Internet have trapped people and there is no exit chance in the coming decades. Traditional political, economic and social lives of people in contemporary society become non-adjustable. People are transforming their routine businesses from standard setups to modern information technology.

Digital Literacy skills are computer, media, information and internet literacy skills in the modern digital environment. The ability to use information and communication technologies to attain libraries' goals with computer technology and internet literacy is called Digital Literacy Skills. The libraries are designed to preserve the information, organize the information, and access the organized structure information, accessed and retrieved with easy access. Libraries worldwide have transformed their services over the Internet. Unfortunately, people are still using the old traditional services in Pakistan and are not fully aware of Digital Literacy Skills.

In the era of Information Technology, sharing networks, retrieval and preservation of information have become social, political and cultural survival for humanity worldwide. Digital Literacy skills have become an essential tool for the general masses and library administrations exclusively. In other words, the collection of abilities, knowledge, and personal characteristics via multiple communication channels is considered Digital Literacy Skills, and learning these skills prepares library professionals for better knowledge sharing.

To recognize the sources and resources in the digital environment, Digital Literacy Skills helps the patrons to browse quality research. To share digitally encoded information and fulfil the users' needs in a library, Librarians should be made digitally literate. Digital Literacy Skills could help them stay abreast with the current environment and provide patrons with the best services in time of need. The librarians should fully be equipped with Digital Literacy Skills in order to search and retrieve quality information for their users.

Librarians face numerous challenges and are less motivated to acquire the desirable material for teachers, students and researchers. The authorities may help the librarians to adopt a stable framework. They should be given the training to eradicate such gaps in the digital environment. In the acquisition of Digital Literacy Skills, there are several hindrances like lack of interest of librarians and poor-quality Internet. These demotivating factors have a significant relationship to demographic characteristics and should be addressed at the university level. Librarians in Pakistan have not been educated in Digital Literacy Skills for many reasons.

One such reason is the interest of concerned authorities and the role of library associations. These obstacles should be addressed to enhance Digital Literacy Skills. There are five constructs of Digital Literacy Skills essential for librarians and needs of the day: Library Literacy, Computer Literacy, Information Retrieval Literacy, Tools Literacy and Research Support Literacy; librarians should be cautious about these skills. It has been found that digital literacy skills among Pakistani librarians are a bit low and need proper attention to be improved. The university authorities should prepare them for acquiring these skills through training programmes across the country. Digital literacy skills in Pakistan would help librarians attain organizational goals and will help them enhance quality assurance services. The Government of Pakistan may initiate some training programmes that help them to educate their youth and prepare them for online digital businesses. In this connection, the

government should reserve meagre funds for educational institutions in order to prepare our youth for online jobs. For library professionals, the department should revise the BS and Master level curriculum and incorporate the topic related to digital and literacy skills. All librarians should be granted training to attain such skills that could help them augment performance. Moving to computer and laptop technology with steady WiFi or fixed broadband connection will turn a library into a partial digital literacy centre. Remember! youth and libraries raise the countries, ignoring them will create severe loss.

Right to Information, The Role of Libraries

Pakistan Observer, January 25, 2021

Information is a great source of mind mapping, decision-making, problem-solving, and knowledge updating. Webster's dictionary defines that "Information plays an important role in achieving the goals and objectives of the society." It is said that since ancient times, Information has been recognized as a vital importance for the development of economic, political, social, and environmental activities. Each Information accessed could be granted to the public, and there should be rights of access to common people. For this, the first act was introduced in 1766 in Sweden. The purpose of this act was to grant free access to the Information by common people.

There are numerous terms used for access to Information, such as the Right to Information (RTI), Right of Access to Information (RAI), and Freedom of Information (FOI). These rights are for the people of any country who can retrieve Information from the government departments in prescribed ways. The right of access to Information is the act of human right and a fundamental right for the people who can retrieve Information for understanding. The right of access to Information plays a pivotal role in empowering the people of states to promote democracy, accountability, and transparency in government organizations.

In 2019, there were one hundred and forty- five developing and developed countries in the world that recognized this right (Global Right to Information Rating, 2018, 2019). In Pakistan, the history of acknowledgement rights started in 2000 by promulgating the Freedom of Information Ordinance (FIO). Whereas the Provincial Assembly of Baluchistan acknowledged this right in 2005, the Sindh Provincial Assembly recognized the same right in 2006. The Punjab province and KPK provinces passed the Right of Information bill in 2013.

All five Acts on the "Right of Access to Information" in Pakistan and the provision of the "Right of Access to Information, "has a positive gesture among researchers. For the provision of such information, there is an extreme need to provide a good information service by designated, trained, and expert information professionals monitoring their information services. Moreover, these Acts elaborated that Principal Information Officers (PIOs) are supposed to provide information on time and accurately. It is important to offer citizens the Right of Access to Information (RAI); simultaneously, it is important to ensure the information service quality under it. User's perceptions about products, services, and experiences value a lot.

Information service is divided into four units: (1) information-providing services, (2) information-retrieving services, (3) information individual services, and (4) information organization services. Both types (information providers and seekers) of respondents highlighted that there was an extreme need for utilizing information communication technologies in the information provision services and information organization services as well. Regular annual reports about information services must be published by the government bodies. There must be proactive disclosure of Information that is relevant to citizens of Pakistan under the law. List down the exempted Information in detail to avoid any ambiguities in information provision service. There was an extreme need to publish all relevant facts, important policies, and decisions of government organizations on its website. There is a simple formula that equates the library with the concept of freedom of Information. Modern libraries are agents of the provision of information resources and services. It has universally been recognized that libraries are agents of freedom of Information, especially national libraries. The freedom of Information in libraries is different from library to library for many reasons, as we know that in a modern democratic society, freedom of information has central principles. So, we should know how

it functions. In the second aspect, it should be noticed what should be claimed for libraries and what is best perceived as unhelpful rhetoric. Modern Libraries are well-stocked, but given that the stock of libraries is usually the result of a selection process, we should confirm from the information providers how to make this Information effective to help people find the right Information.

Perspective of Pakistan Research Repository

Pakistan Observer, December 29, 2020

After the World Wide Web (1989) invention, the concept of 'Open Repository' took place earlier in 1990. The first project was introduced for the Repository of Physics Arxiv in 1991 and can still be viewed on the Web. The purpose of this project was to showcase the research contribution of scholars in the field of physics. Different software emerged for a repository of research works in around the countries. Still, a few are the most popular, which can be used for research repositories free of cost, like Dspace, It is an open-access repository software initially launched in November 2002. This software is highly commendable for presenting scholarly content in digital format.

Another popular software is BRICKS (Building Resources for Integrated Cultural Knowledge Services), an open-source software for digital assets. The other one is Aigaion a web-based reference management software run by various institutions for repository purposes. Institutional Repository synonymously is a digital archive of scholarly works produced by institutions in multidisciplinary subjects. Under this project, theses, research papers, monographs, conference reports and similar scholarly contents can be collected, organized, and distributed for communities and individuals researching at the university level.

Different institutions in Pakistan have initiated these services through indigenous software for showcasing their research like Libmax, Library Content Manager and so on. The Higher Education Commission of Pakistan had undertaken a project of Pakistan Research Repository (2006) in order to promote our research in the international visibility of research organizations outside of institutes in Pakistan. Such a project aimed to maintain digital archives of all scholarly works produced by universities in Pakistan at both public and private levels. The website can be found with the URL address http://prr.hec.gov.pk/jspui/. This project was initiated in March 2006 under the supervision of then-chairman Dr. Ataurrahman. Initially, few Ph.D. theses were uploaded for public access and few people were addressed to visit the link and quench their research thirst with the help of scientific research.

Around the world, different strategies and infrastructures have been adopted for scholarly and repository content in order to showcase their research to scholars on different continents. Pakistan has adopted a national model approach under the direction of the Higher Education Commission Pakistan (HEC) named Pakistan Research Repository (PRR). It is based on centralized management and allows scholars to access the record of scholarly content produced locally. HEC, in collaboration with universities and research organizations in Pakistan, has created this project in order to grant full access to the published research of various varsities. It is an open-access research repository for teachers, students and staff of universities in Pakistan.

Many scholars in Pakistan are oblivious and are addressed by their faculties. It is the moral duty of professors, librarians and researchers to share this website with other scholars having difficulties in browsing similar literature. The purpose of this brief insight is to exhibit our research with scholars who are unfamiliar with the Pakistan Research Repository. HEC's prime purpose for the Pakistan Research Repository (PPR) was to explore the proposed project envisaged by the HEC, grant access to actual records being presented, and critically analyze the prevailing situation and future scenario of PRR. Apart from this, the project was initiated to perform quantitative analysis of the present collection of a repository based on subject, institution, type and year; and to identify measures for improving the performance of PRR. I may suggest to the higher authority of HEC to also ensure the latest theses of Master, and MPhil. Besides these, all conference reports, monographs and similar scholarly work may also be exhibited through the Research Repository website. The website may be

improved by including different parameters like Google Scholar Accounts. Researchers of public and private universities may be granted a login password like Turnitin. They should be convinced to publish their articles which are being contributed to national and international journals. Standard policy for open-access repositories should also be made available on the Pakistan Research Repository Website.

Advocacy for Prison Libraries in Pakistan

Pakistan Observer, October 20, 2020

Oxford Learner Dictionary defines prison as "a building where people are kept as a punishment for a crime they have committed, or while they are waiting for trial". The Jail is a correctional institution for people who have committed crimes and are waiting for court trials. A prison is a place where offenders are corrected with punishment and hard labour. Initially, prisoners were provided religious books for readings like the Quran, Bible, Torah, Gospel, etc. There was no leisure time for prisoners in jails. Different library associations in the world came forward. They raised their voices for prison libraries such as the American Prison Association, International Federation of Library Associations, American Library Association, and American Correctional Association, etc. Many reforms like the American Library Association's Bill of Rights, the freedom to view, the freedom to read, guidelines for library usage, and British guidelines for prison libraries were initiated. Reforms at a global level have been made, but there is no concept of prison libraries in Pakistan and they are worse than other developing countries.

Prisoners are humans and have the equal rights to read and get a good education like other humans in society. A person who does not have access to the right information is directionless, clueless, and visionless. Libraries are the symbol of freedom for the entire community, inclusively prisoners. The attitude of prisoners can be changed through the mosque and other religious institutions; the library is the place where they can forget their sorrows by reading fascinating and informative books. The prime purpose of the prison library is to educate the offenders/criminals. A Library that serves the prisoner's educational needs is called a prisoner library. A prisoner or offender is usually a man who sinned intentionally or unintentionally. Law enforcement agencies have established libraries across the world. The sole purpose of these libraries is to educate the inmates.

Several reforms have been brought to prisons worldwide. In many states, heavy budgets have been spent on law and justice reforms to reduce crimes. A lush green lawn, rich libraries, medical centres, educational institutions, and vocational training have been made part of prisons. Still, in Pakistan, the prison system is cumbersome and outmoded and presents a sorry state of affairs. Prison education involves vocational training or academic education supplied to prisoners as part of their rehabilitation and preparation for life outside prison. To educate prisoners means to reduce the crime ratio in a broader sense.

Pakistan Journal of Criminology reported that there are 99 jails in Pakistan, Sindh province has 23, Punjab province has 22, KPK has 11, and Balochistan has 6; however, Gilgit-Baltistan and AJK have 11 prisons, respectively. In Pakistan, the prison system is suffering from multiple disorders; the most obvious in my view are (1) abundantly overcrowded(2) all criminals reside in one place like terrorists, petty criminals, serious offenders and political convicts, habitual offenders, etc.(3) Unwarranted physical punishment is frequently inflicted on the prisoners (4) Medical facilities available in our prisons are deplorable (5) and the last but not the least, lack of Libraries. As per rule, 979 of the Jail Manual, an illiterate prisoner may be imparted education up to the primary level. However, all aspirants, who wish for higher studies, ought to be provided educational facilities like study centers and well-furnished libraries in jail premises, where one can read books, journals, magazines, newspapers, etc. Qualifying final exams will also grant remission to prisoners as per rule 215.

Currently, there is no organized system for imparting a proper education in our prisons. With the help of law and justice reform, Prime Minister Imran Khan may improve our prison system by facilitating general vocational and technical education to all prisoners. Each prison should have a well-stocked library with books, journals, magazines, newspapers and audio-visual material for prisoners. People

may also help them donate books to prison libraries. Public and private sector institutions should be solicited to establish distance learning and exam centres on jail premises. The Education Ministry should be approached to manage courses through correspondence for the jail inmates.

International Association of School Librarianship

Pakistani School Libraries, Response to COVID-19
IASL October, 2020

COVID-19 or Coronavirus caused severe global socioeconomic disruption. The government imposed social distancing, shutdown, curfews, quarantine, cancellation, and other preventive measures to control the outbreak and its expansion from further destruction. Coronavirus upended the world during the first half of 2020 and badly affected every region. The first case emerged in Wuhan, China, in November 2019. Since that time World Health Organization (WHO) declared it a "public health emergency of international concern," and on March 11, 2020, it was declared a global pandemic by WHO. As of October 5, 2020, more than 35,399,250 active cases were recorded worldwide; however, the death ratio as per world meter was 1,041,824 recorded; for details, view the figure below.

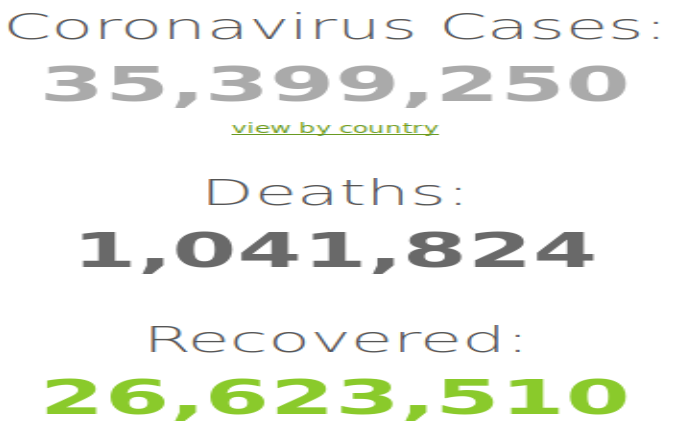

Figure taken from:
https://www.worldometers.info/coronavirus/

In Pakistan, the first case of COVID-19 occurred on February 26, 2020, and since that time, 314,616 cases were recorded as of October 5, 2020. The death ratio has increased to 6,513 and is increasing in the second layer.

Figure taken from:
https://www.worldometers.info/coronavirus/country/pakistan/

The library practitioner has devised numerous policy plans to tackle and prevent this global health crisis at the school level. Pakistan is tackling COVID-19 with systematic methods and, so far, many precautionary measures like smart lock-down, social distancing, and wearing masks while going to offices and business places. Public gathering places like cinema halls, marriage halls, public parks, and playgrounds were made close. Schools, colleges, and universities have been shut down since March 2020. Many remote study programmes were initiated at academic institutions via Zoom and other applications. People in urban areas were educated to access online material via the internet. Digital Libraries were set up to access them online for study material. During this period, the Ministry of Education launched a TV Channel for kids in urban and suburban areas to engage their children during a pandemic crisis. Schools were opened in mid-September 2020, and the government has formulated some SOPs for schools and all academic institutions that ought to be followed. Failing to them will lead them to close again. Academia at college, school, and university levels are using preventive and protective measures to avoid the further spreading of COVID-19; for this instructional measurement of wearing masks, using sanitisers, washing hands, and social distancing are necessary.

OUR VISION
OUR MISSION
The School Fosters Academic, Personal And
Social Development In A Secure Positive, Supportive
Inclusive And Challenging Environment, So That Each
Individual Can Enjoy Her Learning, Character Building
Through Equal Learning Opportunities, So The
Can Achieve Full Potential That Transforms
Into Confident And Caring Citizen.
GOALS

DawnNews,https://www.dawn.com/news/1573944/sops-for-educational-institutions-issued

According to (UNESCO) report of 2010, more than 1, 63, 000 public primary schools in Pakistan and the total number of school libraries is 7000 (IFLA World Report, 2010). Many schools at the government level are deprived of libraries; nevertheless, some urban schools have developed few libraries.

Each school has a room for library and reading purposes, but none has spent a meagre amount for library causes; they have always ignored the finding of literally decades of research that shows why school libraries and qualified teacher-librarians are essential components in the academic programming of any school.

COVID-19 is spreading like waves, and controlling it is a challenging job; however, if the above precautionary measures were adopted at schools and college libraries, it may control disease and prevent our children from further catastrophe. School libraries are an essential part of the intellectual growth of our children. They may suffer from having no adequate reading resources in any pandemic.

Librarians with Leadership Skills

Pakistan Observer, September 11, 2020

Many people have argued that even though leadership and management are synonym terms, certain differences exist between them. Abraham Zaleznik has articulated that manager “seek order and control and are almost compulsively addicted to disposing of problems before they understand their potential significance.” In other words, the manager uses well-established techniques to accomplish the goals of an organization. On the other hand, leaders are individuals who answer any question in silence, are patient during the chaos, and avoid premature finalities on important tasks. There are more than a hundred definitions of leadership, but in a nutshell, a leader always focuses on social influence to attain societal and organizational goals with his leadership skills. In a broader sense, leadership's motto is to motivate people to develop, accept and carry out a shared vision.

Perception of leadership in libraries varies among organizations. There are either middle managers or group leaders in small libraries, while many organizations, recruit librarians based on library education with practical experience in library affairs. However, to meet the competencies of organizational goals, librarians sometimes feel left out and avoid extracurricular activities. In modern-day libraries, people are hiring smart workers to cope with all leadership challenges. A shortcoming is that librarians in many organizations confine themselves only to the library team. At the same time, they should also be evident at all levels of the organization, such as trust, creativity, innovation, adaptability, and imagination. Librarians are true leaders and should focus more on problem-solving, efficiency, quality improvement and effectiveness in the services being offered.

Gone are the days when librarians were confined to the four walls of libraries. Today, librarians are engaged in the mission and vision of organizations. Librarians in the Age of Information Technology adjust themselves in organizational climates to achieve the shared vision of that organization. For this, they should use their influential leadership styles. They should motivate others to use the information for the assigned research tasks. In the leadership phenomenon, the role of librarians is considerable. In today’s age, people in smart organizations are hiring smart leaders with innovative skills and ideas. A similar case can now be witnessed for librarians. Those who are unwilling to update their skills are no longer acceptable/suitable for meeting organizational standards.

A librarian should play the role of a cooperative researcher. In this case, they should develop and manage effective services that are helpful to researchers as peruser's needs. Librarians should support and collaborate with users by enhancing their services up to the entire satisfaction of researchers. In academic libraries, the librarians should cooperate with the students, faculty, and researchers to attain their educational goals. In the preservation of information and library resources, the role of librarians is to understand the organizational structure to use the information in existing formats. Librarians should also demonstrate the values and principles of librarianship while trying to achieve the organization's goals.

Librarians should educate themselves about distance education in an organization. In this regard, they should develop web-based software for outreach to clients. This strategy will make them proactive information providers for the benefit of their organization. To carry out their institutions' mission, librarians should play a role as liaisons to the faculty to fulfil their research needs. In any organization, people often hire staff to lead the organization in the right direction.

Librarians will also seek the following leadership qualities to become a great leader:
(a) Understanding your unique role: Librarians should understand their unique role in any organization. In almost all cases, they are the only academic teachers in a building who interact with different people daily. This unique role will make them an invaluable resource in the literacy and research planning transition. (b) Act with confidence: Librarians are capable of attaining the educational goals of the organization in curriculum, student grouping, literacy, research as well as technology integration. Hence, they should be confident hold their head high and feel proud that they can offer these assets at any stage. (c) Empowered leader: An empowered leader enables followers, trusts them and develops followers towards their full potential. Confident leaders provide the necessary support because they acknowledge that "raising others raises them, and bringing down others, only bring them down".

Empowering leadership in the library means allowing the staff to freely share their thoughts and ideas to help them attain organizational goals. (d) Visionary Thinker: From the library perspective, if a leader needs to solve tomorrow's problems, they should think differently from the way they do today. A library leader with visionary thinking will move boldly forward and will not look back. For this, a librarian may set a mission and vision to thrive in the future. (e) Trustworthy: Leadership always relies on trust. If there is a trust deficit environment in leadership, leaders will neither attract nor retain followers. Trustworthy leadership in a library always leads an organization in the right direction. To sum it up, Brian Tracy, an American-Canadian public motivational speaker, rightly said that “leadership is the ability to get extraordinary achievement from ordinary people.”

The Role of Data Librarianship in Pakistan

Pakistan Observer, August 16, 2020

Big Data has become a buzzword in Information Technology, business, education and health sectors. Creative innovations in many fields introduced remarkable developments, including library services. Today's libraries have a vital influence on Research Data Management (RDM). Researchers in modern libraries demand high-level literature without wasting time. Library managers are faced with the immense challenge of fulfilling the needs of their patrons within available resources. Data Librarianship, in this regard, has paramount importance for the researcher, which means professional skills to manage and organize data for the use of researchers. The primary duty of Data Librarianship (DL) is to equip researchers with the necessary knowledge by using Research Data Management (RDM).

Data Librarianship deals with storage, access, curation and preservation of data. DL has to manage and disseminate information swiftly. The role of library services has drastically changed in the era of information technology; the discovery of Big Data has doubled the duty of librarians. In contemporary librarianship, RDM and academic libraries have been interconnected to explore the desired research quickly; open access initiatives on the internet have given birth to Data Librarianship. The concept of Data Librarianship emerged with the advent of data centres and data archives at the global level. The only logic that librarians take a leading role in their management is the management of research data in the age of scientific discoveries and their usefulness. The open science movement is a significant source for researchers in a broader sense. Institutions have triggered new skills for research owing to Data Librarianship.

In developed countries like the USA, UK, and China, the role of Data Librarianship is to abreast researchers with quality material. Still, in developing countries like Pakistan, its role varies from region to region, deepening their skills. There is a broader spectrum of data librarianship; most prominent are computer science, and digital designs and a few others have to cope with complex nature. Big Data has diverted the minds of researchers from traditional research to smart research. The growing interest of researchers has changed not only the nature of academia but also the librarians globally. Rooting from the influence of academic libraries in advancing data management practices, data librarianship was conceptualized and the job position of data librarian, has emerged.

Data librarianship performs different jobs. However, some following duties are noteworthy
(i) Policies, procedures and planning for RDM (ii) Interacting with researchers (iii) Training of fellow researchers (iv) Provision of advisory services to research on how to manage, archive and disseminate knowledge (v) Information Literacy programmes (vi) Reference services (vii) Directing researchers to scholarly publishing, open access and metrics, etc. The position of Data librarianship in Pakistan is at a slow pace but witnessing a developing landscape. Lack of skills, low budgets, slow buy-in from researchers and support from higher authorities are a few particular issues that are not allowing Pakistani librarians to accept these changes.

Academic libraries have continuously embraced technological innovation, and the demand for researchers is increasing rapidly in utilizing big data. Data librarianship in Pakistan is in an exacerbating condition for many reasons; a few noteworthy are obsolete library policies, cost of technologies, information and digital literacy, research ethics/reading cultures, open access publishing, outreach services, scholarly communications government interest, etc. Libraries in Pakistan are taking different approaches to Data Librarianship. However poor responses from authorities and stakeholders do not allow librarians to initiate RDM in academia. The wider

acceptance of technology, speedy progress in services and dynamic growth have spurred library professionals to address Data Librarianship. In short, such an initiative in Pakistan will boost research culture, contributing immensely to the knowledge economy, and improvement in science and technology of the country.

Tactics for Better Writing Skills
Pakistan Observer, July 12, 2020

According to an ancient history Encyclopedia, “the early writing was called cuneiform and consisted of making specific marks in wet clay with a reed implement can be traced in 3500-3000 BC in Sumer, Southern Mesopotamia present Iraq”. Surah al-Qalam, on the other hand, is the sixty-eighth chapter of the Holy Quran narrated as “Nun. By the pen and what they inscribe”. A pen is a powerful tool for writing, albeit writing has been revived into too many shapes.

Present writing owes to Lewis Edson Waterman, who invented the fountain pen in 1883; writing became proactive when Lazlo Biro, a Hungarian inventor, invented ball-point for underwater usage during the Second War, writing became popular till 1943. Meanwhile, it was an immediate hit in writing of Biro's new invention and did not leak at high altitudes. Ball-point was orchestrated for a new revolution in writing skills. The first-ever computer built in 1948, named Manchester Mark I, was stored and processed quickly using an electronic transistor.

Writing skills is an art that expresses one's views; one can amalgamate a few sentences together to communicate one's thoughts. Everyone wants to be a good writer; however, skills are required for great writing. To improve writing, one needs to start with mastering different mini-skills. Experts have practised good tactics to improve their writing skills. The first step for a good writer is to enhance vocabulary and try to use it in a different style to make a good sentence; a sparkling sentence makes your writing skills more efficient. Writing explicitly means to express, not to impress. Usage of bombastic words in writing without coherence and accuracy will not make one a prolific writer. Grammatically correct sentences will beautify the writing and make the reader more obsessed with reading making writing lucid and fluent.

It needs to be brought home. Choosing captivating words and avoiding bland phrases are prerequisites for writing. To make readers preoccupied with writing, try to play with mini-stories. Keep yourself away from mobile for 20-30 minutes daily and try to write new ideas and read them repeatedly; this practice will certainly develop your writing skills more sophisticated. Sphere some time from your busy schedule for writing and try to write for some time each day. Try to publish a piece of content every week and make yourself accountable for such practice. Make a draft before writing properly; in this case, you may edit and format it after reading it thoroughly. Edit writing constantly to eschew errors.

Make your content clearer and more lucid because mediocre writing bores the readers to tears. Nourishing contents engage, inspires and delights readers to read them comprehensively. Try to help your readers by nourishing content rather than making them more complicated. Try to advise your reader more precisely and practically by demonstrating your tips. Advice should be more practical by demonstrating your tips through arguments. One can also quote an expert's saying in sentences to increase the interest of readers. Share informative pieces to take a deeper look at your topic. Readers always get advice, comfort and inspiration from good content and quench their thirst with solid ideas. Serve your readers with mixed nourishing content in the right way to make them crave more. Use attention-grabbing headlines or key headings, which help the reader to get an idea. Convert big topics to simple words for inspirational ideas.

Read books extensively for enhancement of knowledge and concrete ideas. Summarizing long sentences in short ones will make writing more fascinating. Avoid lengthy paragraphs in writing.

Don't over-explain everything. The writer has to communicate the message or advice in simple words. Proofreading is as essential as the air we breathe; without proofreading, one would find innumerable mistakes in writing. In proofreading, you can polish your mistakes. Establish a writing routine and stick to it.

As the saying goes, "A listener is a good speaker and a good reader is a great writer." Editor's critic's group ought to be joined for improvement of writing. One can join such a platform for valuable input from the experts. Use powerful verbs. Avoid adverbs. Listen to the experts. Try to avoid passive voice in sentences. One of the most common manifestations of bad writing is an overuse of the passive voice. Practice improves. To sum up, writing is half-knowledge; their writing gauges great intellectuals.

Advocacy for Libraries at National and Public Parks

Pakistan Observer, July 3, 2020

A National Park is "an area of land protected by the government for people to visit because of its natural beauty and historic or scientific interest" (Oxford Learner Dictionary. As per the statistics of Wildlife of Pakistan, there are more than 6555 national parks worldwide. In Pakistan, 26 National parks exist; the oldest is the Lal Sohanra National Park, established in 1972. Parks' purposes are to establish the biological, geological, and cultural importance of nations and protect their people's biodiversity. Parks are sources of recreation, education, and science for the public. Global warming, populations, and reduction of biological diversity are growing threats to the entire world; Pakistan has been facing the same challenges for the last few decades. National parks are regarded as ecological laboratories in the contemporary environment. These Parks are significant assets for the ecological health of the planet and for preserving the environment clean.

Parks are naturally attractive places for photography, Eco-tourism, tracking, bird and animal watching, etc. Lush green forests in the National parks are excellent sources of carbon emissions in the surrounding environment. Parks are excellent sources of education and recreation, and millions of people visit these National parks every year. Cafe bars, resorts, and restaurants have been made available, but these parks are deprived of library services. Markets, walking trails, gardens, and plazas are public spaces and essential components for healthy communities and livable cities; however, we do not know how libraries and these other spaces, especially parks, relate to one another and how they might relate to one another shortly. One of the primary values of public libraries are a necessary component in public spaces or parks.

These libraries are playing a positive role as a trusted, accessible, neutral public space. Libraries are communication centres, gathering places, catalysts for civic development, and sites where people of all ages, races, classes, and cultures can congregate. Public places like libraries and Parks are sites for social infrastructure, and both are bringing people together. Parks and libraries have the potential to be powerful symbols and agents for civic places around which community service projects could be organized.

Libraries are places where people interact, imagine, and gather to explore new ideas. Advocacy for Park Libraries will add value to our communities and serve as a cultural centre for our patrons. Libraries in Park are sources of community building, community centres for diverse populations, centres for the arts and libraries, and youth champions. The library may offer exemplary services that support the notion beyond information. In Pakistan, the ex-chairman CDA Kamran Lashari took the initiative in 2007 to construct libraries and gyms that will benefit the public at large. Few libraries still exist with miserable conditions and scarcity of the book. In Pakistan's capital, only every sector boasts multiple parks and even separate parks for children, women, and senior citizens.

These community parks have football grounds, basketball courts, and tennis courts but do not have good libraries for the masses who can spend a few minutes reading good books and newspapers. The incumbent government also took the initiative to establish libraries in public parks in Punjab province. Asif Mehmood (Adviser on Horticulture and Tourism to the Chief Minister Punjab articulated in a press conference held in October 2019, he expressed that all big parks in Punjab province will be granted libraries if there is enough space. But no attention has been paid so far. There are only a few libraries established in the Park of Pakistan.

The National Library of Pakistan, with the help of the Parks and Horticulture Authority (PHA), may take this initiative. The civil society and private companies may be directed, and the contract may be awarded as per the tender's rules. I assure you that such an initiative would pave the way for people of all ages, races, classes, and cultures. Park libraries in Pakistan will achieve the Ministry of Federal Education's visionary motto and professional training, which is " To develop human resources by ensuring equal access and educational excellence across Pakistan."

COVID-19: Impact on Research and Libraries in Pakistan

Daily Times, July 3, 2020

COVID-19 is a widespread pandemic disease detected in Wuhan (China) in November 2019. The pandemic has affected 213 Countries. Several major cities around the globe are in lockdown. The world response to COVID-19 is different from country to country, but as a whole, it has badly crumbled the world's economy. COVID-19 has disturbed the political, socioeconomic, financial and religious structures of the world. The world's topmost economies like the US, China, UK, France, Germany, Italy, Japan and many others are on the verge of collapse. Many states have temporarily closed their active businesses. Educational institutions such as universities, colleges and schools have been closed globally and it is believed that 90 percent of the world's students will be affected. There is a great challenge to distance learners. Many institutions are shifting their courses online and students are engaging with e-books, e-journals and online learning. The Global Education coalition has launched UNESCO as an emergency response to help countries scale up their learning practice via distance mode.

In Pakistan, the first case of COVID-19 was diagnosed on 26th February 2020 them, there are more than 209,337 diagnosed cases and 4,304 death cases detected as of June 30, 2020, in the world meter report. A country with more than 60 percent of youth relies on physical research. Libraries are regarded as one of the few places where one can go and borrow books without any cost. Libraries serve as a lifeline for low-income families. Several traditional libraries are offering physical services to their patrons. Public libraries serve the entire community; unfortunately, many public libraries in Pakistan do not even have their websites to offer online services to users. Colleges and School libraries are at the mercy of Allah. There has been no advancement since the advent of advanced technologies in Pakistan. Covid-19 has affected not only the business community in Pakistan but also educational institutions. The government is unable to devise policy plans for the researchers in the country. Most researchers use physical libraries but, the Physical branches have already been shut down.

Covid-19 has affected not only the business community in Pakistan but also educational institutions. The government is unable to devise policy plans for the researchers in the country. Most researchers use physical libraries but the physical branches have already been shut down. However, a few libraries offer digital content for those who have internet access elsewhere. Many developed countries have directed their researchers to online resources. The Mission of UNESCO and the International Federation of Library Associations (IFLA) jointly granted access to information resources via the digital library. The Internet Archive took another fascinating step on March 24 called the National Emergency Library. The purpose of this project is to give access to 1.4 million books in its digital lending library and these services will remain in place until June 30, 2020. Many publishers and digital libraries have offered free content and curated their collections for the masses to read them without disruption. These are credible resources giving access to high-quality e-books and journals and similar educational content. People were in-cognizant of digital content before COVID-19. The pandemic has made many users aware of a digital library for the first time to use these contents because of the closure of libraries. However, those traditional libraries which do not offer digital services face many challenges to keep their services active during COVID-19.

Librarians in different countries have adopted new practices to achieve their academic goals. They provide access to electronic resources in several ways. Some offer VPN Services to electronic databases, while others give direct login passwords to Digital Databases. The universities, colleges and schools in Pakistan have been in lockdown since March 2020. Ministry of Education and Higher

Education Commission Pakistan have jointly devised some policy plans for online classes. Ironically, no strategy so far has been designed for online material. Researchers confront numerous challenges; one such challenge is to get desired material at their desktops. Several publishers have launched free content during COVID-19. However, many researchers in Pakistan have not been educated to get benefits from extensive online materials.

The 21st Century, presumably, is an era of online activities. Classes are now made available online, and workshops, seminars and conferences are conducted online. Libraries in Pakistan still evoke the old pictures of the 20th century. To stay safe, healthy, and Eco-friendly through this global pandemic and beyond, the government should spend more budget on libraries than online classes. Digital Libraries have been becoming norms at colleges and universities, combining technology and information resources, allowing remote access to educational content and breaking down physical barriers. The government must ensure a digital library culture in the country. To thrive in this new reality, libraries need to accelerate and be more proactive and responsive.

Barriers to E-libraries in Pakistan

Pakistan Observer, June 27, 2020 [4]

The word e-library is defined by the Collin Dictionary as "an electronic or online library where one can have access to books, journals, novels, articles, or any other information over the net." It is a source of electronic representation on the Web. Since the advent of the Internet, many traditional libraries have shifted their services to e-library and access has been granted to their users. The electronic library acquires, processes, stores, evaluates and disseminates information via electronic means. An e-library is a virtual representation of electronic material. In other words, it's a fingertip library for researchers.

The concept of e-Library is a new phenomenon in Pakistan. Some projects were undertaken in the last couple of decades, different universities and other research institutions have initiated several other projects in Pakistan. Many indigenous library Software have been designed by several institutions to show their repository to the end-users. The demand for researchers is increasing rapidly. Many people do not find time to visit the library personally. In such circumstances, researchers rely on electronic libraries. Librarians are changing agents and abreast themselves with the latest technologies. Much open-source software is available for the digitization of library data via the Internet. Some most popular software such as DSpace, Endnote and Greenstone, etc. are of prime importance.

The Higher Education Commission of Pakistan initiated the first-ever project by granting access to different institutions in the country. HEC provides access to high-quality, peer-reviewed journals, databases, articles and e-books across a wide range of disciplines. Digital Library is a programme that provides online content to researchers within public and private universities and non-profit research organizations. Another fascinating project of the Higher Education Commission is the Pakistan Research Repository (PRR). The purpose of this project is to showcase the Ph.D. theses of various scholars on the Web. This website updates from time to time and theses from different universities are made available here.

Before that, another project was initiated by the then Chief Minister of Punjab Shahbaz Sharif. The Punjab IT Board was given the task to launch a central digital library and access to full-text e-books, e-journals, e-theses, online reference collections was given to 20 Districts of Punjab. Several workshops/seminars/conferences were conducted on open invitation freely. The Board also decided that access to these libraries will be expanded to public and private university libraries soon. Many Librarians were engaged in running these libraries smoothly. Prime Minister Imran Khan terminated all library staff in the last couple of weeks from their active jobs. The government with poor policy failed to devise policy plans for the researchers in Pakistan; most researchers rely on libraries.

Physical branches have already been shut down, but still, a few libraries offer a wealth of digital content for those who have internet access elsewhere. UNESCO and the International Federation of Library Associations (IFLA) jointly initiated a programme which links researchers with contemporary library services. Meanwhile, another step has been taken by the Internet Archive on 24 March, under the name of National Emergency Library, which gives access to 1.4 million books in its digital lending library. It has been decided that such services will remain in place until June 30, 2020.

[4] https://pakobserver.net/barriers-for-e-libraries-in-pakistan/

The Digital Library project of Punjab province was a nice gesture having paramount importance for the entire community. The scholars have benefited from scholarly content at their homes during COVID-19. Researchers in Pakistan face numerous challenges; one such challenge is to get their desired content via electronic libraries. The Prime Minister was considered a ray of hope for the entire nation, but stopping the working librarians from their active jobs is an injustice to library staff. The Prime Minister (PM) needs to take aggressive action against these unethical steps taken by their staff in Punjab province. The e-libraries should be made accessible to all researchers in the province. There is a dire need for more libraries throughout the country. Such libraries are likely to enhance the research level of our valued researchers.

Many jobless librarians ought to be adjusted in e-libraries back. The Government of Pakistan should be compassionate towards librarians. It is a fact that those who shut the door of libraries will open the door of ignorance. The Prime Minister (PM) of Pakistan should bear in mind that demand for library services has surged since the shutdown began in March. The coming era would be an era of online activities and without e-libraries, Pakistan will never be able to cope with any pandemic/outbreak in the future.

Initiative of Mosque Libraries in Pakistan

Pakistan Observer, December 5, 2020

Islam is the submission of man's will to Allah's commandments. People come together in mosques to worship Allah. The word mosque in the Arabic language is Masjid. Its meaning a place of praying or doing ritual activities for Allah. Masjid is a place where Muslims pray and worship Allah five times a day. Initially, in a Muslim society, books were found in each Masjid and the size of collections grew into full-fledged libraries. The Muslims, indeed, honour the mosque and do not hesitate to use it for any laudable purpose such as libraries, community centres house schools, etc.

From the beginning, Muslim education was closely connected with mosques and even today, The Quran and Hadith are part of our mosques. All mosques are not imparting Islamic education. Madrassa education has been interlinked with mosques for such instruction. Masjid became centres of education in Muslim societies during the Prophet's (Peace be upon him) era. Many companions used to come there and learn the Quran and Hadiths.

In order to comprehend the Islamic religion, mosque libraries are the most significant area in need of research since mosque libraries fulfil several important roles that deserve scholarly attention. Muslim fondness for reading and writing converted mosques into learning centres. History witnessed, that Muslims contributed significantly to the development of Islamic civilization; some good examples are Baitul Hikmat Library in Baghdad, the Al-Azhar Mosque in Egypt, and the Grand Mosque Library in Cordova, etc. Mosque libraries are deeply rooted in Islam as a religion and as a civilization but very little has been written about this important issue.

Mosque libraries are an important segment of Muslim society—a great source of education. However, a question that comes to mind is how to establish a mosque library.

Here are some suggestions that will be helpful for everyone one (1) Proposal for a library: write up a proposal, and submit it to the Board of Masjid and explain the benefit and necessity of having a library in your Masjid, convince them and advise them to set up a mosque library ; (2) Reserve a specific corner for the library: one should keep in mind a proper place before setting up a library inside the mosque, a specific corner should be vacated (3) Reach out to the public in the mosque; a masjid is a worship place where people from different areas come together. Hence, reach out to, consult, advise, and suggest how to make this library useful (4) Sources of Funds: a mosque library cannot be run without proper funds. In this regard, one should create a source of funding to run a proper library; Funds may be collected in the form of donations, library fees, connection with charity organizations, and use of political sources to collect resources. (5) Custodian for mosque library:after submitting the proposal and reserving a place for the library, there should be an active custodian, who may look after the mosque library (6) Audience: before initiating a mosque library, determine your audience that for whom you want to establish this library. One should determine the area of the audience and their level of interest in books. (7) Sources of books and other media: in this case, one should determine who will provide books and other reading material. For this, a comprehensive policy may be formulated for books and other materials. (8) Non-book material: books are bread and butter for any library but keep the non-book material in mind. These include DVDs, Magazines and journals for a mosque library. (9) Furniture: There should be proper furniture inside the library; these include tables, chairs, and shelves. If one does not have chairs for seating in their library, alternatively, a carpet may be utilized for study purposes inside the library.

In Islamabad, only some successful libraries are being run by mosques and are highly commendable in this regard. People should visit there before initiating mosque libraries in their respective mosques.

Al-Dawah Public Library in Faisal Mosque and Al-Nadva Educational Trust Library at Bara Kahu are some noteworthy projects.

Big Data in Library Services

Daily Times, January 5, 2020

Big data was first used by Doug Laney, an Industrial analyst, in 2001. He further articulated that Big Data is a kind of data, which is large, fast or complex, and difficult to process using traditional methods. He viewed that Big Data largely depends on three V's–Volume, Velocity and Variety. The volume is the collection of data from a variety of sources such as Smart IoT devices, videos, industrial equipment, business transactions and social media. In the past, storing such data was a hectic problem to control, but cheaper storage platforms, such as Data Lakes and Hadoop (open-source software), have eased the burden now. In the age of the Internet with unprecedented speed, the Velocity of data has become a hectic job to control promptly. To organize them in the manner of a sequence that becomes a dream to overcome. RFID tags, sensors and smart meters are good examples. Variety means the shapes or formats of data that come in structured and unstructured forms, such as emails, videos, audio, financial transactions, etc. The Big Data has been divided into three main formats: Structured, Unstructured and Semi-structured.

The importance of Big Data does not mean how much data you have or what you do with it, but the main purpose of such data is to what extent the data is cost reduction, time reduction or usefulness for the developmental process. Big Data is a helpful tool for smart decision-making and helps in business-related tasks. Libraries have become the hub of research activities worldwide. Big Data has numerous sources, most common of which are streaming data, the Internet of Things and similar devices, like smart cars, industrial equipment medical devices etc. One can analyse them on arrivals, whether to keep them or not. Social media is another source of Big Data; dealing with a large amount of data in different formats in the shape of videos, images, texts and sounds as useful tools for marketing, sales support functions etc. Some good examples are Facebook, YouTube, Instagram, etc. Other sources of Big Data are publicly available data, which come in a massive amount of open data, such as US Government data, European Union open Data portal, CIA World Fact-book, etc.

In emerging technology, Big Data is intertwined with different tools like smart cities, Artificial Intelligence and the Internet of Things (IoT). These tools have been interconnected with different businesses, such as location-tracking, precision medicine, fraud detection and handling, advertising, entertainment and media, weather tracking, etc. In the education sector, big data can improve student results; customise programmes; reduce dropouts target international recruitment etc.

The library deals with data and holds a long history of a multidimensional focus on collection, storing and organizing, preserving and providing access to information in traditional as well as in digital formats both in printed and electronic material. Libraries have become the hub of research activities worldwide and people of different ages desire to get access to huge information. As data is everything in the age of information technology the demand of people is increasing rapidly. Libraries can use big data for many reasons such as to make better decisions, create better services, GIS Mapping to get more knowledge about library customers where our non-customers live etc.

Meanwhile, a librarian can buy better stuff with the help of Big Data. One can also track other library-related analytics. Libraries use Big Data to make better decisions and create better services. As discussed, Big Data comprises high Velocity, high Variety and high-Volume information while libraries deal with such variety, volumes and velocities. Modern libraries are stepping towards the digitization process, which offers services in different formats such as texts, images, videos, audio and other resources. These resources require costly technologies and Big Data can help them better

enhance their insight and decision-making. Academic libraries deal with primary and secondary data in large amounts and intend to share maximum information with the end-users. Big Data technologies can help librarians by adding value and are regarded as useful tools for societal and macro-level activities. The role of libraries in the 21st Century remains trivialised due to emerging technology and information-seeking behaviour.

While launching a project of Big Data in practice, one can face several challenges, as this application has both light and dark sides. Big Data advocates open access to various information which causes data security due to its openness.

Hence, Big Data creates issues initially but library practitioners have a key role owing to their expertise. Libraries need corresponding and extensive skills before stepping down into Big Data. In this regard, Librarians may play a key role in managing large-sized datasets. The size and variety of data are increasing significantly and librarians may get proper control with the help of Big Data. In such activities, professional librarians must ensure the quality of data for the end-users. IT and technical skills have become a need of the hour for every profession. In this regard, the four V's of Big Data might be kept in mind before stepping into Big Data. These are Volume, Velocity, Variety and Veracity. Managing Big Data is a big challenge and to overcome this challenge, professional knowledge and environment should be brought under consideration, before stepping into Big Data.

Artificial Intelligence in Library Services

Daily Times, April 19, 2020

Libraries have always resisted change. Libraries are also viewed as an agent of change. The journey from clay tablet to e-tablet and from papyrus to paper has been made but it has not yet ended. Changing the paradigm from a traditional library setup to a modern information network has enhanced the role of libraries as real service agents. These changes have stunned some scholars who wonder what else is going to be brought into consideration to impart quality and optimal information in minimal time. svg%3ECutting-edge technologies have been utilised in many fields. Educational institutions worldwide accept these changes, from time to time. Libraries are hubs of research activities in academic buildings. The radical changes in the era of technology have boosted library services; libraries are embracing these changes for many reasons.

Now we enter the age of the Industrial Revolution 4.0 and booming Artificial intelligence (AI). Artificial Intelligence is a comprehensive discipline developed by computer science, comprehensive science, cognitive science, neuroscience, psychology, linguistics, brain science and other disciplines. AI is a computer programme that has some qualities that a human brain has, like the ability to understand language, recognise pictures and understand how to solve a problem. AI has, broadly, been divided into three types: symbolism, connectionism, and behaviourism. Symbolism is based on logical reasoning that stimulates human intelligent behaviour. The role of connectionism is based on a connecting mechanism with a learning algorithm between two neural networks. Behaviourism is the cybernetic and perceptual-action control system. The most popular technical fields in AI research are broadly based on problem-solving, natural language processing and deep learning.

AI has been deployed in numerous businesses worldwide. Some popular examples of AI are manufacturing robots; virtual travel booking agents such as Uber and Careem; Google Smart Maps; plagiarism check software such as Turnitin; and social media apps like Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest, Snapchat, and Google Translate etc. Education systems will change in a broader sense if new technologies are brought under consideration in developing countries like Pakistan. Libraries are hubs of social education, learning and knowledge and will gain more momentum by deploying new technology for research works. Many libraries have enhanced their services to meet the desired needs of their researchers. Such drastic changes have improved their standards, but many librarians still contend that the deployment of AI in the library field may replace the role of librarians.

Libraries are hubs of research activities in academic buildings. The radical changes in the era of technology have boosted library services.AI will enrich librarians' knowledge exchange and interpersonal interactions. They ought to change their minds before rejecting this splendid technology. They should accept it with a positive attitude as it will contribute to the activation of library communication functions and services' efficiency. This technology is not intended to replace librarians; it will enhance their communication skills with their patterns. Implementing this technology will not only bring power tools to the vast collection of their library but will discover, search and analyse their collection in no time.

As we embrace technological innovations in our lives, we should also grapple with their implications.

Most of the library expert systems and Artificial Intelligence applications that have been developed and are currently under development are essential aids to facilitate the business of running libraries. New systems can be used for collection development, budgeting, personnel scheduling arrangement, and disaster planning and responses.

Modern libraries have incorporated many systems that help users in many fields, such as references and information retrieval.

There is some positive potential for launching AI in library services. Some worth mentioning are knowledge of users' needs and understanding of building collection. This could mean the creation of new jobs in the library field.

AI means faster searches and learning more about searchers' behaviour, which will help them improve their searching skills by identifying problems with metadata, reviewing how the material was indexed and ensuring that it was discoverable.

Research Support in Pakistani Libraries

Pakistan Observer, February 15, 2020

MODERN libraries are regarded as hubs of research activities. Research often is known as a fact for pursuing a higher degree and without libraries, research is tiresome, exhaustive and tedious. Research is a combination of two words Re and Search. Re means again and Search means to find out. Thus, research meant digging out the old knowledge to discover new facts. Merriam-Webster Dictionary defined the word research as a "studious inquiry or examination especially: investigation or experimentation aimed at the discovery and interpretation of facts, revision of accepted theories or laws in the light of new facts, or practical application of such new or revised theories or laws."

People have different opinions about research support. Some people have argued that research support means financial support for conducting a research project. While others contemplate it as administrative support, some view that research support means getting guidance in the research journey, but, in the library scenario, research support means connecting the researcher with the material for which the researcher yearns. We know that people are researching for many reasons. Some research is for academic purposes while others conduct them for non-academic purposes. The primary purpose of academic and non-academic research is to discover new facts about some significant problems. Thus, the primary ambition of research is to find out a solution to speculative problems.

Libraries are the nucleus of research activities in Pakistan. In a coincidence, researchers who often visit the libraries do not know what the library has on a specific subject. The craft of the librarian is to wield the researcher's interest. The scholars start thinking when librarians link them with their desired material. In any academic library, research support plays a key role, but the role of liaison librarian is of great importance: A person with good communication and research skills is proffered for this job. The Pakistani Librarians are jack of all trades who perform all duties. There are three parts of research support in the libraries; some are (a) Research Support Office: this kind of support deals with research grants, and quality assessment for research in libraries (b) Research Material: a reference to library contents in different formats which can be used properly for research.
(c) Information specialists refer researchers to liaison librarians or experts in research activities.

The present-day libraries in Pakistan perform better jobs in research support activities; some meaningful activities are (1) Access to digital information, these are readily available information in digital format which allows a researcher and scholars to get enormous access remotely through digital applications (2) Development of digital collections, librarians in Pakistan develop the more digital collection to connect researchers with updated information. (3) The sharing process enables librarians to make payment agreements for sharing databases that are too expensive for individual researchers to subscribe to. (4) Discovery and access, Technology has changed the taste of researchers, in order to retrieve information at an enormous speed, librarians prepared themselves for these skills. Those who are not ready to change their traditional skills will no longer be proactive (5) Metadata and catalogue; the librarians must be aware the readers about accessing the item with descriptive information to help them find the relevant information in bulk, hereof, librarians may catalogue all information in a good manner to provide them better stuff.

The modern libraries in Pakistan perform a pivotal role in the research arena. Good libraries in Pakistan retain good staff for researchers and keep them abreast with quality information. Libraries are promoting and exploiting new technology for scholarly communication. Standard libraries

increased their repositories to showcase the research profile of their researchers. Rich libraries enhance the value of library services by connecting the researcher with quality information. Outstanding libraries in Pakistan provide a better work environment for researchers in order to achieve the goals of organizations. To provide better techniques for research support in library services, the academia in Pakistan should undertake the following steps for better research activities (1) Web 3.0 technology may be deployed for quality services, Information literacy, partnership building, information management, research data management, metadata and research data, etc. It is an established fact that researchers in today's age are influenced by lack of time, money and the possibility to focus on his/her research. The librarian should help them by providing the right information at the right time. The librarians working in an academic environment may connect themselves with the researcher as a research partner. By doing this practice, the librarians in Pakistan can improve their decision-making and problem-solving skills and enable themselves to a critical consumer of academic literature.

Faculty at an academic level feel greater appreciation by imparting them better services. The librarian should adopt the skills in modern information technology beyond their traditional skills. In doing this practice, librarians must disseminate information in pursuance of researchers' demands. Five activities, if ratified in the library services, will promote library culture in Pakistan. Those are institutional repositories, open-access information, bibliometrics, orientation services, advanced information literacy, research seminar series, etc. I am optimistic that such services will develop research activities in Pakistan and that the libraries will become hubs of research activities in a true sense.

China-Pakistan Libraries Association

PIVOT Magazine, July 2019

China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) is a flagship project of Belt and Road Initiatives (BRI) and a framework for regional connectivity. After his Excellency President Xi Jinping to Pakistan in April 2015, the two sides have set up the 1+4 cooperation mode, namely prioritizing, energy, transport, infrastructure, and industrial cooperation, which has opened a new chapter for the CPEC construction. The total cost of this mega-venture, CPEC, is 62 billion dollars which covers all projects. CPEC would be more fruitful if some educational segments were brought under consideration because today's economy is viewed as a knowledge-based economy. In any global agenda, education is considered to be an indispensable element. Many projects in education under China Pakistan Economic Corridor have already been undertaken, like CPEC Study centres in academia and study centers at different think tanks, etc. Numerous scholarships for higher studies have already been created under the CPEC umbrella; an exchange of educational experts from both sides is also going on. However, no encouraging steps have yet been taken in library and publication exchange programmes.

Pakistan is facing numerous challenges like political, cultural, socioeconomic, ethnic-based, etc. But, the development of the Education Sector is one of the biggest challenges for our country. If 140 million of our youth are not educated properly, it will create chaos, disarray, discontent, and ultimately unemployment in the country in the coming few years. Maslow's Hierarchy Theory represents that people's basic needs in any country are education, health and jobs. The Chinese government model has addressed such issues and overcomes these challenges. The Pakistani Government is lagging behind and is unable to pay full attention to these challenging issues. As an all-weather friend of Pakistan, China has always supported Pakistan in the challenges it faces. According to the Chinese Ministry of Education, China was the most popular destination for international students in Asia in 2018, having attracted 489,200 foreign students.

Pakistan was among the top three countries for outbound students to China. According to official figures from Pakistan, in terms of education, it is claimed that approximately 25,000 Pakistani students are currently studying in China, one-third of whom are on scholarships offered by the Chinese Government. CPEC, in the educational spectrum, has paved the way for the youth of Pakistan to some extent. However, proper attention needs to be given to the educational sector in order to make Pakistan a leading nation in terms of education. Libraries and Publications Exchange Programmes are interconnecting people across the globe. Since China launched an economic reform and opened itself to the world in 1979, Chinese academic libraries have made great strides towards modernization. Three major areas have attained impressive changes: space, collection, and technology. China has a prestigious library setup and is becoming a hub of first-hand knowledge. The National Library of China, founded by the Qing Government in 1909 in Beijing, is one of the largest libraries in China and Asia and the third-largest national library in the world. The library holds the largest collection of Chinese literature and historical documents. It is said that this library has more than 32 million volumes of books. On the other hand, the National Library of Pakistan is the largest repository library in our country, situated in Islamabad. It has more than 300,000 books and other materials and is one of the finest libraries in Pakistan.

Coming to other libraries in Pakistan, sadly, they are not in the best of conditions and are facing so many challenges, such as lack of proper finance, proper attention of higher authorities, lack of professional staff and scarcity of modern furniture and IT tools. China Pakistan Economic Corridor should fully cooperate in the educational uplift of Pakistan. Libraries and library staff should also be given opportunities to share and care for the people of both republics. Apart from this, Chinese

librarians should be given a chance to visit Pakistan and see the libraries' condition. Similarly, Pakistani librarians should also be granted a chance for short programmes held in China. Resources sharing and resource development of both countries can be initiated under CPEC as several American Lincoln Centres have been established in Pakistani libraries at the University level. China and Pakistan should set up specific corners in many academic and research libraries under the CPEC project and assign them tentative names.

Pakistan Library Association is the largest library association in the country and represents the status of libraries in Pakistan and around the world. I propose that the China Library Association should also be involved with our Libraries' Association and a memorandum of understanding should be signed. One such association is CALA: Chinese American Librarians Association. Another thing I would like to suggest is that a new association under the China Pakistan Library Association (CPLA) may be established and representatives from both countries can be involved to connect and cooperate in resources and services for the betterment of library services. It is also suggested that the Chinese Government may establish a state-of-the-art library in each centre at different universities and think tanks across the country and qualified staff may be hired to deliver services to its researchers working to better CPEC causes. I am optimistic that such initiatives will promote a chain of confidence-building measurements between China and Pakistan. Such library activities will connect the people of China and Pakistan to help them know about both countries' cultures, traditions, norms, and values.

Status of Public Libraries in Pakistan

Pakistan Observer, May 12, 2019

According to the Merriam-Webster Dictionary, a public library is "a nonprofit library maintained for public use and usually supported in whole or in part by local taxation." In other words, public libraries are government institutions, and the civic system of the specific state, country, city, etc., provides funds for them to run. Public libraries serve in their respective communities irrespective of caste, creed and religion, etc.; public libraries are different in response to services, resources, location, size and community they serve. Through independent decision-making and cultural development of individuals and social groups, the public library provides a prerequisite for lifelong learning, which is considered a prime local gateway to knowledge. Public libraries help promote an educational society while providing information to all ages residing in contemporary society. In education, the public library supports both types of education, whether formal or non-formal and that too at all levels. In information, the public library plays a pivotal role by providing them with the latest and updated information, making these resources readily available to users of all ages. In personal development, public libraries provide opportunities for personal creative development. For children and the youth in general, the role of public libraries can never be denied. It promotes reading habits in children and youth from an early age. Hence, given that this is the freedom of information age, the services in public libraries should not be subject to ideological, political, or religious censorship or commercial pressures.

Service's Provision in Public Libraries:

Both within the library and in the community, the public library provides a range of services to satisfy users' needs. The prime aim of the public library is to support the general users by inculcating a reading culture. In this regard, the library must facilitate access to its services for all who have difficulty in reading. The library will also provide books and other media for reading in the library. Similarly, information available in printed and electronic format may also be provided to the general readers. Users' education such as literacy programmes, lifelong learning, leisure time interests, community activities, cultural activities, recreation readings, etc. is the basic services of public libraries. Access to information at all levels, in cooperation with other organizations by collecting material on the local community and making it readily accessible, is also the duty of public libraries. Training of people of all ages in the use of information and associated technology. Providing services to the disabled community, children and women of all ages are also included in public library services. The public library is a gate to the information world by making it accessible to all. In short, we may say that a public library is helping to bridge the gap between the information-rich and 'the information-poor'.

Status of Public Libraries in Pakistan:

The British colonial ruler established few public libraries in their realm, but access was limited to the literary class and educated elite. The deprivation of the general masses from the public libraries in those times had a cascading effect. It created a huge gap between the poorer and richer classes in Pakistan. After the independence of Pakistan in 1947, Pakistan inherited only two libraries in its part names, the Punjab University Library and the Punjab Public Library. Both libraries are situated in Lahore presently. According to a web report currently, there are 77 Public Libraries in different cities of Pakistan. However, the drastic situation and lack of attention from the government means that the

condition of present public libraries in Pakistan is mournful. Although some initiatives have already been taken, the situation is still worsening. It needs proper attention from the government to uplift the library culture for the general masses of the community.

Problems being faced by the Public Libraries in Pakistan
Availability of funds, poor building, lack of furniture, shelves, no professional staff, lack of IT Technology, Legislation of the library, outdated material, non-availability of electricity and much more.

What the Government should do:

The civil authority does not give much importance to public libraries; the government should take serious notice against the corrupt mafia who use library finance illegally. Professional staff inside the library play an important role. Without such staff, running a public library is not an easy feat. The government should hire professional librarians for this job. The current non-professional staff doesn't know how to run the library affairs. To handle such a situation, qualified librarians may be hired to use them in the right direction. The 21st-century libraries are based on proper ICT, without proper IT tools and internet facilities to run big libraries. The government should provide ICT facilities in public libraries to update the general public. Sufficient funds may be provided for the procurement of fresh books and other relevant materials.
The following point are important to be noted:

- Lack of Infrastructure such as shelves, reading tables, chairs, and IT equipment may kindly be replaced with a new one.
- The old building may be renovated and proper maintenance may kindly be refurbished.
- The congenial atmosphere may be provided in the summer and winter seasons.
- Old and outdated material may be removed and converted to the modern syllabus.
- Marketing plans such as the location of library buildings, resources and services may be announced properly on the websites of public libraries.
- Legislation for staff, funds and services may be made necessary.
- The website for all public libraries may be launched to update the general public on what the specific library has on different subjects.
- A separate corner for female visitors may also be created and updated accordingly in a society like Pakistan.
- Children's sections should be established in large libraries and new collections may be added according to their syllabus.
- The organizational structure of the public libraries may be made clear and independent.

Public libraries are important for those interested in reading but cannot afford to buy expensive books. The public library is the library where the readers explore the realm of wisdom.

You can find many definitions of social networking in dictionaries and the internet but, the one defined by the Oxford Learners Dictionary as "a social networking site or application through which users can communicate with each other by adding information, messages and images, etc. a network of social connections and personal relationships between people-to-people in the region usually have a broad social network." Social networking is increasing rapidly, but a few social networking sites are familiar to all ages, such as Facebook, YouTube, WhatsApp, Linked In, etc.

Figure 1: Indicates usage of Social Networking sites in Millions

Thus, many people across the world are familiar with smartphones and are preoccupied with these networks. Children in the current era are waking up with cell phones and sleeping with cell phones. Many school-going children have their smartphones and one can see them playing with their phones anytime. The era of Information Technology has highly affected many children, adolescents, youth, and even Older people. Many schools allow students to use these gadgets for educational purposes only. Unlike in the past, schools are now getting more and more fashionable. Before, schools were merely buildings of four walls with a single teacher. Modern schools present a highly extensive and conducive environment in terms of cognitive approach and paradigm shift. The worldwide phenomenon has been approved that schools are primarily pedagogical institutions, subsequently parental nourishment. The library plays a key role in boosting up children's minds at the school level. Social networking can only be used for educational purposes in order to share good things relevant to education. A Facebook page proved to be a great source of communication. WhatsApp helps them to be in touch with friends and teachers in their time of need. YouTube can be used only for online lectures to enhance their knowledge capacity. Flickr may be used to explore photos of friends.

Figure 2: Popular Social Networking Sites connects students with Libraries

A paradigm shift is taking place from the traditional library setup to the modern networking system. Schools and adjacent libraries should also be improved to maximize the usage of social networking for educational growth. If proper necessary actions are not taken to implement this social networking for educational purposes, the students will use these networking sites negatively. Libraries worldwide are abreast with the latest technology trends, and librarians are experimenting with these latest technologies to help them. School Libraries in the modern era of information technology should direct their students to use these social networking sites for educational purposes only. Many cutting-edge technologies have already been implemented at the university level but, a limited budget is insufficient for these technologies to spend more on these costly technologies. While implementing social networking sites at school libraries, following rules need to be brought into consideration;

- Copyright and fair use laws should not be ignored.
- Commercial promotions and Spam should not be spread.
- Racist content and obscene content should be restricted.
- Secrets items should not be posted.
- Only truthful information should be posted.
- Accept responsibility for contents.
- The school libraries should focus only on Library 2.0 initially.

Role of IoT in Library Services
Daily Times, October 24, 2019

Internet of Things (IoT) technology has been implemented in different trades. It is considered to be one of the easiest ways of doing things with smart technology. A few well-known examples of the IoT is the Nest Thermostat, with which an air conditioner is controlled from the phone via the internet. Smart lights are another example of IoT; a person can switch the lights on and off using his phone. The Bluetooth tracker is another example of IoT that can be used for car keys. Technology is reshaping rapidly, and appliances are now being approached through smartphones. Smart Home appliances such as Google Home, Amazon Echo and Apple Home Kit are popular examples of IoT. Many people use Fitbits as a tool for health and exercise caretakers. Smart buildings and smart cities are considered to be the larger extension of the IoT.

According to Dictionary.com definition, the Internet of Things is "a network of everyday devices, appliances, and other objects equipped with computer chips and sensors that can collect and transmit data through the Internet."The IoT has become a widespread technology across the world at a rapid speed. This technology makes human work faster, easier and more reliable. Many educational institutions in developed and developing countries use IoT. Radical changes occurred in the education sector with advanced and emerging technology innovations, government regulations, and student mobility. Manufacturing companies introduced applications to interconnect people with applications for many reasons. Smartphones have made everything easy and approachable. Customer software developers introduce new experiences, which help educational institutions boost their education system via smartphones. Software developers provide tailored solutions to humans for educational gains, which help students and faculty solve their issues in less time. As students use smartphones all the time, they would also like to use them more in classrooms. The use of devices for automated tasks is an example of the IoT. We can use the IoT for an efficient teaching process and special education for special children.

Libraries are hubs of educational institutions, and without the new splendid technologies, libraries will be inadequate. According to a survey conducted by the OCLC in 2015, the IoT is mostly related to intelligent uses of space and facilities, and libraries should provide these services for their patrons. The services would require Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) tags as aids for increased visibility and unique identification. Some libraries are incorporating IoT technology, such as Smart Building Technology, in their system. Modern library buildings are interconnected with the IoT to keep the library temperature normal in the Summer and Winter Seasons. These systems can be controlled through a smartphone app. Some buildings also have security systems via mobile apps, another good use of the IoT. Customer software developers introduce new experiences, which help educational institutions boost their education system via smartphones.
RFID sensor is IoT technology and has been around for a while. Beacon Technology is a library-focused company that services modern library buildings and is famous for its state-of-the-art technology. Also useful is a people counter Google analytics style dashboard. The library staff measures the future through open hardware sensors to identify different services, such as what patrons browsed, what parts of the library were busy during which parts of the day, etc. Such sensors allow librarians to make strategic decisions for their patrons that create a more efficient and more effective experience.
Besides classrooms, libraries play an effective role in the learning process. Previously, students had to borrow books, go to the library and copy information for classwork. Now students do the same stuff via their smartphones that connect them with librarians. These services help in the strategic

decisions of academia in a modern library setup. Most libraries lack the appropriate technology to offer the best services to their patrons. Many libraries face several challenges, such as a lack of cutting-edge technologies and their appropriate usage. Libraries should be equipped with the right technology infrastructure-sensors, readers, services, and software. Custom software is designed to link customers and supporters. Libraries deal with customers and should also be connected with the Integrated Library System for smooth functioning. The existing technologies in libraries cannot be ignored or skipped. It is encouraging that the IoT is maturing with more physical objects. The IoT in library services may be wary of progress, but its usefulness is without a doubt. As education is necessary for all, libraries are learning hubs and play a nucleus role in educational institutions. IoT and software development tools could make the experience a whole lot better.

Librarians who Won the Laurels

Pakistan Observer, September 22, 2019

Librarianship is a profession that is an ancient and honourable one. Its sole purpose is to provide the right information to the right person at the right time. History is repleted with innumerable testimonies that those who contributed in different fields are still remembered. Although many of them are no longer with us, their names will be remembered forever. The librarians, who won the laurels in their careers, are more in numbers, but only a few are discussed here as under;

(1) **Mao Zedong**: Mao Zedong is considered the revolutionist of China who united China in the 1940s and 50s. In 1918 he lived in Peking, China and was selected as an Assistant Librarian at Peking University of China. The Chief Librarian of Peking University was a believer in Marxism but, he converted Mao to Communism.

(2) **Laura Bush:** She was the first lady of George W. Bush from 2001-2009 and earned her master's degree from Texas at Austin. She supported G.W. Bush throughout his campaign and succeeded him in the election. She supported librarians in their recruitment process and time scale. During her stay in the office, she visited many libraries around the world. She was running an educational project during her tenure as a first lady.

(3**) Golda Meir**: who is known to be the most influential librarian before her political career. She was the fourth prime minister of Israel from 1969-74 and signed the Israeli Declaration of Independence in 1948. She remained an Ambassador to the Soviet Union and labour minister from 1949-56.

(4) J. Edgar Hoover: Edgar is the legendary director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), who started an investigation at a domestic level from 1924-72. He headed the FBI in 1935 as a founder leader. Before this career, he remained a messenger, and cataloguer in the Library of Congress in 1919. He left the Library of Congress and started his new career as a special assistant to the Attorney General.

(5) **Seyd Mohammad Khatami:** He was the fifth president of the Islamic Republic of Iran and remained Minister of Culture in Iran. He headed the National Library and Archive Organization. Before his political career, he was one of the most influential people in Iran's cultural and political affairs. w.

(6**) Marcel Proust:** He is a French writer born in 1871 and is known to be the most influential novelist and critic of all time. His most famous work search of Lost Times is still studied today. He remained a school Librarian in France.

(7) **Joanna Cole:** She is a popular producer of BBC Children's TV show Bod. She is a renowned writer for writing the Magic School Bus series to entertain elementary-aged children about the human body, space and more. She remained a school teacher, book editor and writer. Above all, she was a renowned librarian of that time.

(8) **Benjamin Franklin:** He is regarded as the founding father of the USA, born in 1706. God bestowed upon him multiple talents. He served as a librarian for a brief period and was also credited with founding the first American Library (A private subscription Library called the Library Company of Philadelphia. He died in 1790.

(9) **Pope Pius XI:** He was born in 1857 and established the Feast of Christ, the king and spoke out against crimes, social justice and unethical financial corruption. He also reorganized Archives, Scholars, Artists and Philosophers. Before being XI Pope from 1929-39, he was a chief librarian at the Milan Seminary of the Vatican Library. He also developed his classification system for books and other reading material.

10. **Jacob Grimm**: He is a well-known writer and won many awards in writing. His fairy tales were first published in 1812. Her other popular stories Hansel and Gretel, and Cinderella and Snow White are still classic children's stories and reinvented as plays. He also presented the ever-best Disney movies. He worked as a librarian in Kasel. Jacob and his brother collected folk tales from the ordinary citizens of Germany in hopes of uniting the area kingdom for sharing a similar culture.

11. **Professor Dr. Anis Khurshid**: He died on 4th January 2008. Obtained Ph.D. Degree from Pittsburgh University in 1969. In recognition of his great achievements in Library and Information Sciences, he was awarded the Pride of Performance award by the then president of Pakistan. He is known to be the father of Modern Librarianship in Pakistan.

World Book and Copyright Day

Pakistan Observer, April 23, 2019

Book is an acronym of Big Ocean of Knowledge OR Built-in Orderly Organized knowledge. Undoubtedly, the book is an unprecedented ocean of knowledge. Our holy book The Holy Quran says in Sura Al Baqarah Verse number 2 that dhalikal kitabu laa raiba Fi means that this is the book about which there is no doubt. We live in the ocean of knowledge and books teach us how to swim in the ocean of knowledge. There is no better companion in the world than books. Nice books can make one smarter and lead them in the right direction. "Marcus Tullius Cicero, a Roman Philosopher, orator, lawyer, and statesman, articulated that "a room without books is like a body without a soul." People in diversified subjects contribute well in their literary works to promote good readers in their respective fields. Some authors are writing for all classes such as Fiction, Drama, Novel and Storytelling books, etc. These authors are unsung heroes and are contributing their due respect to their society. They bring awareness, energizing the masses with their literary words.

The protection of the rights of authors is a big question in any society. Do we pay tribute to these heroes for their artistic works? Are these authors treated nicely for their art in their respective fields? I somewhat must say yes, but in reality, we do not give them the rights for their artisan work which they deserve.

This is why many book lovers worldwide observe World Book and Copyright Day every year on April 23. The connection of this day was made in 1923 for the first time in Spain for paying tribute to an author named Miguel de Cervantes, who died on April 23, 1923. This date has also been marked in honour of William Shakespeare, a renowned English poet, playwright, actor and world's greatest dramatist who died on April 23, 1616.

In 1995, UNESCO decided to celebrate the Catalonian Festival as a World Book and Copyright Day. On this day, people tribute authors, scriptwriters, composers and producers for their credited work. Besides promoting the importance of reading habits, on this day, we also celebrate the intellectual property rights of the authors for their commendable jobs. The main purpose of this day is to promote reading habits and encourage publishing agencies in literary productions. This day promotes recognizing the scope of books – as books always play a pivotal role in society, which links the people between past and future. Books are like a bridge connecting generation to generation. People who mostly rely on books come together and participate in March to honour and pay their full tributes to the authors and publishing production agencies for their remarkable job.

Copyright was considered an artistic guarantee source for a decent income, but now even a single artist, whether author, composer, imaging director, or publisher, does not make a single penny from their artistic works in the contemporary world. Many great writers contribute their intellectual thoughts with enthusiasm to uplift society with their intellectual approach to bringing awareness. Many authors, scriptwriters, and composers work hard for a nominal charge or voluntarily promote a trend-setting environment for the common masses. Intellectual Property (IP) is an idea or creative and innovative subject of one's thought. An individual can own the right to a certain piece of IP and thus control its use, or in some cases, benefit from its application. The right to protect authors' intellectual property applies to all original creations that result from human thoughts, obtaining a patent, etc.

UNESCO is doing a marvelous job promoting reading habits and protecting producers' rights in many fields. Equal access to knowledge for diversity and creativity is the basic aim of UNESCO. For this purpose, all stakeholders such as authors, librarians, publishers, teachers, mass media, humanitarian NGOs, public and private institutions, and all those who wish to work together to celebrate World Book and Copyright Day with great zeal and zest. World Book and Copyright Day have become a platform to connect millions of people worldwide for attributions to the intellectual class in society. To cherish books as a valuable tool for knowledge-sharing, mutual understanding and openness to a diversified world, I request to academia, book lovers and authors to come forward and tribute your valuable thoughts in favour of those unsung heroes who brought us to this level of life.

Library Services in the Marketing Arena

Pakistan Observer, March 14, 2019

In general words, marketing is everything you do to place your product or service in the hands of potential customers. Customers have different shapes in marketing such as potential, loyal, new, impulsive and discount customers. Marketing is the central focus of every successful organization, whether profit-making or non-profit-making. The application of marketing influences successful libraries. Marketing is a source of awareness that reduces barriers to use and access, satisfies users' needs, offers benefits, persuades and informs customers in different ways. Marketing in library services has become a top trend in contemporary society. The World Wide Web has greatly influenced different services of Marketing.

Similarly, libraries around the globe have hugged different services differently to provide the best possible services to their end-users. In an old traditional setup, we know that libraries were considered a storehouse of knowledge, but now, the 21st-Century concept has been changed. Modern libraries are treasures of knowledge, a place where knowledge meets mind, a house of wisdom, a hub of ideas, a zone where knowledge of eminent scholars comes together to educate the masses, that part of academia, where knowledge is organized in an easily available manner, to those, who quench their thirst for knowledge. libraries around the globe are presenting reading materials such as Books, Journals, Films, Manuscripts and Images, Audiovisual material, etc. Preservation of this knowledge is the primary task of Libraries across the world, and classifying them in an organized manner is the foremost duty of library practitioners worldwide.

Here preservation is not only the task of library staff but keeping them secure for the next generation is the prime task of library practitioners. Now, giving them access to those materials held by the library has become a tendency among libraries as we know that library is performing a vital role in making these printed and non-printed materials available to their users, with the advent of advanced technologies in 21st-Century various tools, have been introduced for the marketing of library resources and services. Initially, web 1.0 Technology was introduced to show the users what they have to offer. Subsequently, Web 2.0 Technology was orchestrated to promote library marketing. Now the question arises whether these tools are object-oriented or not. Yes, the answer is that people are gaining more up-to-date information using Web 2.0 Technology in many developed countries like the USA and the UK.

Here another question is stepping up in the users' minds: What does Web 2.0 Technology mean for library services? O'Reilly, in 2005 defined the term for the first time. He stated that "Web 2.0" describes the changing trends in the use of World Wide Web Technology and web design that aim to enhance creativity, communications, secure information sharing, collaboration and functionality of the web." How to use the library 2.0 Technology for marketing the library services, Philip Kotlar has mentioned the definition of Marketing, a Marketing Guru. He defines that Marketing is "a social and managerial process by which individuals and groups obtain what they need and want through creating, offering and exchanging products of value and others".

Keeping in mind the view of Philip Kotlar, we can easily comprehend that library services are a joint venture of library staff, who work together to achieve the common goals of the library. For marketing the library services, the staff would work together to attract more users to their respective libraries. In this regard, the foremost duty of library staff is to educate their users, whether they are students, staff, or faculty members, to facilitate the users. The library staff must educate them on using the available resources and services in the library as we know that there is a great difference between library promotion and company promotion marketing concepts. The company's products are to

increase sales and ultimately gain more profit from it. The library is not for profit, and its basic duty is to attract users to its available material.

The libraries are service-oriented centres and play a significant role in the social and non-profit sectors. In Marketing through advanced technology, many library and information centres have designed their websites to showcase their material with bibliographical details; this is a new mechanism for the marketing of library resources and services. However, the basic tool for marketing library services is Web 2.0 Technology. Several questions accretions in the mind of researchers: What are the key roles of Web 2.0 tools and how can these tools be used for the marketing of library services? These questions will be answered in the next article if Allah will.

Embedded Librarianship: An Overview

Pakistan Observer, February 17, 2019

The term “Embedded Librarianship" has become a prominent buzzword in the library profession in the past few years. The word embedded was adopted from embedded journalism. An embedded journalist is placed with a military unit whose tasks include making observations and reports on the conflict. They also conduct exercises and missions from an insider's vantage point. From a library's perspective, embedded Librarianship is a person involved in the spaces of their users and colleagues either physically or through technology. In short, one can say that librarians' physical and metaphorical location is known to be the embedded librarianship. Many libraries have turned to embedded Librarianship as one solution to better serving patrons and demonstrating value to their communities. The main objective of Embedded Librarianship is to provide timely assistance to students, faculty members and other colleagues in their research. Embedded librarians connect/themselves with students and faculty members in their classrooms, laboratories and studios to provide them with the best possible help in their time of need. Embedded librarians prepare students for research and collaborate with faculty on course-integrated information literacy. The role of Embedded Librarians may never be denied, especially in research assignments, teaching, assignment interpretation and timely student assistance.

Embedded Librarians is a clear and well-articulated idea that would add value to students' learning opportunities. They bring the learning process in closer proximity. The students who get enrolled in the classes will gain more benefits from the expertise of Embedded Librarianship rather than availing of distance education online. Gone are the days when librarians were considered as curators of the library and volumes. The books were locked in cupboards and access was restricted to only registered members. Now library practitioners are getting themselves involved in the learning development of their organizations. The Librarians of contemporary society are becoming more knowledgeable as opposed to the past. The role of embedded and liaison librarians are similar in one aspect but, the main difference between the two lies in the different levels of involvement. While liaison librarians tend to concentrate on academic departments, Embedded Librarians encompass a wider area such as administrative offices, research centres and other programmes at the institutional level. Libraries in educational institutions have become a comfort zone. The work of Embedded Librarians is to support the current and prospective members of the institutions by assisting them in their virtual space.

The main objectives of Embedded Librarianship are to create a strong relationship with the students and faculty members to assist them in their research projects. In Faculty developmental projects such as the faculty learning community, the role of Embedded Librarians has been proven distinguished. The practice of Embedded Librarianship in the learning environment continues to grow and evolve rapidly. The doors of libraries have now been opened to the general readers without class, creed and caste. The Interlibrary loan facilities have made a chain of gestures to communicate the reading material in time of need. Modern Embedded librarians are taking care of their community members and entertaining others beyond the registered members.

The following are some key characteristics of Embedded Librarianship

- They are problem-solving rather than selling products and services.
- They are conveying a positive and open attitude for all community members.
- They are proactive and confident to take initiative in the research domain.
- They know the organizational strengths/weaknesses, structure, culture and political drivers.
- They convey direct messages to the stakeholders of the organization and apprise them about values and concerns.

- They build strong relationships with user groups and communities, which are important to the organization.
- They are working as facilitators in real-time of researchers, faculties and other laboratory workers,
- Embedded librarians learn on the job and share-worthy information.
- They provide information about the Library's Databases, e-books and services.
- They help students find credible web sources.
- They help students with their citation tools.
- They help students brainstorm ideas for research.
- They answer questions about the library and research.

There are also several challenges being faced by the Embedded Librarianship in Pakistan; some of them are collection development, proper finance for library development, human resources, proper usage of Information Communication Technologies, staff training at the national and international level, and proper attention from higher authority. If these issues were resolved, I assure you that the future of Embedded Librarianship in Pakistan is growing. The key focus of the Embedded Librarianship is to achieve the long-term goals of the institutions at the country level. Education is a key element in the progress of any country, and the role of Embedded Librarianship will help in attaining these goals.

Tech Trends in the Library Services
Pakistan Observer, February 5, 2019

Technology initiatives within the realm of libraries can be linked with the advent of the Internet. The last few years are considered to be the most influential years of tech trends. To construct a better world, librarians are experimenting with the latest technology in order to fulfil the patron's research needs. Many new technologies have been introduced across the globe. Still, the potential of certain fields, such as Virtual Reality (VR), Augmented Reality (AR) and Mixed Reality (MR) are major trends in the field of library sciences MR, AR, and VR are virtual field trips that could be introduced and used in the realm of libraries to help the patron to experience a world beyond the four walls of the library, for a solar system, tornado, walk around refugee camp, the 3D model for the human body, vacation spot, preview a college system or test-driving a new car.

These advanced technologies are being adopted in many developing countries, which will be of utmost use. Such trends make our lives safer, easier and more reliable. Similarly, Quantum supremacy and Quantum computing, although in the experimental stage, will enable users to perform calculations faster than digital computers. Embedded Digital Libraries are another milestone that helps the librarian expand the library's mission by providing digital content services in a wider range. For Virtual Learning Environments, the Learning Management System (LMS) is useful, enabling the users to utilize online delivery of course material with the help of Web Applications and software. The library is interlinked with Alexa and Siri through which voice technology from Microsoft, Google, Apple, and Amazon allows the users to ask any questions in their natural language and command the computer to answer them. Using such technology in library services will allow the librarians to respond to patrons.

Blockchain technology is another tool-set being adopted in library services; introduced in 2008 uses a decentralized database to access the pseudonymous digital transaction via networking. Data can be collected and stored for the user's accessibility.

Many libraries in developed and developing countries adopted mobile application technology, which connects users to library resources, thus allowing them to use it via cell or smartphones. 3D Printing has also become a buzzword for the last few years. Many libraries have adopted these services because the charges of 3D Printing become affordable.

As technologies are evolving and new tools have been discovered to provide optimal services in minimal time, in developed countries like the USA, UK and Germany, libraries adopt new technologies for learning, research and information to give the patron the best possible services.

This practice will lead the librarians to learn new technologies in order to abreast their researchers with the latest tools. In this regard, the library schools should also update their curricula by including these new courses. Students are relying less on library services because of their busy schedules. Researchers in the contemporary environment strongly rely on digital content rather than books and similar material. For this, they want to access learning materials online and within a quick time frame. Their changing expectations highly affect library professionals, but keeping in view their extensive demand, the librarians are exploring new ways to cater to their needs. New tools and technologies have been introduced, and people expect to use these technologies to get optimal benefits from these available resources.

In order to keep up with this evolving age of information technology, libraries are adapting new trends based on digital applications and artificial intelligence as new horizons of technology trends have highly affected different services. Similarly, libraries are trendsetters and implement these new technologies for their patron to provide them with access to library resources and services. The future libraries are seen to be more productive than those of the past. The information portals and robotic assistants will be used as guides shortly. Hence, real innovations remain to be seen in library services across the world.

Research, Internet and Libraries

Pakistan Observer, 1-2-2019

Many people argue that the Internet is the kind of library that fulfills the needs of the researchers at their desktops, but I will argue that the Internet is not a substitute for the library but just a search tool. Here I will quote an example of an Online Public Access Catalog in the library services, which direct you to books in the library but never give you access to those books at your doorstep until and unless you don't become a library member. Similarly, the Internet can help you see the contents and read them fully, but the researchers' standards in the past deprived many researchers who relied on the Internet for their research. Libraries are naturally a hub of research for Doctors, Engineers, Social scientists and other experts in different fields. Each library in the world has defined different standards for researchers, but many libraries in the contemporary world have offered state-of-the-art services to their users. According to a survey by the American Library Association, excellent services are the backbone of any library globally, but sophisticated methods being adopted in developed countries are praiseworthy. Only 8% of contents in the form of books and journals have been displayed through the Internet and 92% of contents have existed in the physical libraries worldwide. Researchers are producing research at alarming rates from only 8% of content via the Internet such as Google, Yahoo, MSN, etc., but 92% of content may be explored only by visiting libraries. The standard of research has been badly affected by the Google Mafia in the last few years. Researchers are increasing from time to time, but the Internet adversely affects the standard and quality we have. The youth in the present age enjoy research by viewing the stuff on Google and colourful pictures and tools of enjoyment while browsing their topic. But the capacity of a memory that researchers had in the past is lost badly. The Internet can give you more data than a librarian, but the librarian can give you one and the best. Libraries are critically important in helping researchers to exploit the full benefits and opportunities of the networked world. There are several benefits for researchers while researching libraries. (1) Conducive Environment (2) Study oriented environment (3) Expert opinions in research (4) Access to Contents (5) High-speed Internet (6) Books, Journals and Newspapers (7) Digital repositories of prospect members (8) Access to world digital libraries (9) Printing/photocopying facilities (10) Motivational power of readings in the surrounding, etc. The Internet is one of the powerful instruments for research, learning, and easy access to material in less time, a great source of current information, fact-finding and research development in the history of the human race. No doubt, the Internet is one of the most outstanding inventions in the area of communication. Males, females, young and old, are intoxicated by this worthy invention and considered a source of information, enjoyment and research development. Still, this menace has many disadvantages with context to research and researchers who rely on the Internet. The Internet provides a huge amount of information that confuses researchers in selecting and what to reject. The researchers must be cautious about the information obtained. Most of the information being uploaded on the Internet is not going through a review process. There is no standard policy for information to check the accuracy. An infinite number of titles, texts and abstracts confuse the researchers. Most of the information we pass through is not reviewed or edited by an expert in their field. We don't even know whether the information which we are reading is authentic or not. A disgruntled contributor or a child may upload anything on the Internet which can misguide us. Misuse of one's information has become a trend through the Internet; one can easily steal the data of other authors and get them published in his/her account. The data freely available on the Internet for academic research is not arranged according to the system and has no index format. The printed books and journals in some libraries are more authentic and peer-reviewed than freely available material on the Internet. As a researcher, we should follow standards and quality, not the bulk and quantity. Research, Libraries and the Internet are

similar terms for researchers. Suppose we have good libraries, research material and internet facilities. We can produce better research, which will earn name and fame in contemporary society.

Social Media Impacts on Library Services.

Pakistan Observer, January 18, 2019

Social Media has become a familiar toolset for marketing library services in academic libraries. This medium aims to reach out to the current and prospective members of the library via the Internet. This article will clear the ambiguity in the minds of different users that what is the role of social media in imparting library services to its end users. The term "Social Media" is difficult to define, but different experts define social media differently. "Bradley & McDonald, 2011; Hanna, Rohm, & Crittenden,2011" have defined Social Media as "any Internet-based or mobile application that operates for collaboration, which allows participants to connect, create, comment, view, share, rate, discover, profile and exchange user-generated content." But in simple words, "Social Media refers to an online platform that allows users to link to each other, contribute and share contents/commentary, etc. As a whole, Social Media is intended to facilitate, collaborate, share and conversation through means of Media via the internet." The basic purpose of Social Media is to form a large, internally communicative collective that works together to create meaning and content. It is a source of gatekeepers passing out information to the masses. In the world of Social Media, the masses produce and share information themselves.

The ultimate goal of Social Media is a huge body of content created directly and often collaboratively by the web's users. The information being shared on social media websites is considered user-generated and user-created. The experts have the view that there are six primary types of Social Media which are collaborative projects, content communities, blogs, social networking sites, virtual game worlds, and virtual social worlds. Social Media plays a vital role in reaching out to the current and prospective patrons of the libraries. Many people even don't have time to visit the library physically.

In this case, one can search all news/views through social media tools. Social Media enables libraries to distribute information through a medium. Many patrons are familiar with these techniques. But, still, there are needs for those who are partially familiar with this technology. The advocacy for social media in academic libraries' services requires competencies and content creators who are diligent and skilful about social media tools. While entering the world of Social Media, the library must ensure the form of social media they employ and the contents they produce are relevant to the interest of their audience and end-users. Furthermore, as social media evolves and expands into new forms and shapes, libraries must update themselves with new tools while reshaping with time. The survey shows that over 70% of librarians impart different services to their end-users through social media.

The important thing for the library practitioner is to get some spare time for the patrons, whether new or prospective, by attracting them through the medium of social media. Using social media Snapchat services daily will promote your services, and you will soon have followers and regular library visitors. As aforementioned that there are 70% of the world uses social media in their library services, and approximately 30% of librarians are browsing and pasting on social media sites daily. But, many libraries in developed and developing countries are still not aware of these technologies. Facebook, Twitter, and Linkedin are highly used websites from a library perspective but, some other channels such as WhatsApp, YouTube, Snapchat, RSS, Flickr, Instagram, Pinterest, etc., of used in library services like social media tools, I ensure that by adding these services in the academic libraries, it will bring charm to in library services.

International Association of School Librarianship

School Library System in Pakistan: An Overview
January 2019

School is defined as "An institution for educating children." Merriam-Webster Dictionary defined the word library as “a place in which literary, musical, artistic, or reference materials (such as books, manuscripts, recordings, or films) are kept for use but not for sale.” The school affirms that education begins at birth and continues throughout life. Therefore, all our values apply equally to adults, parents, teachers, guardians and all children in the school. Every School in developed countries maintains its libraries for the enrolled students but, developing countries like Pakistan have not yet paid proper attention; However, few schools maintain their libraries in the Private Sector; mostly, the government schools are deprived of such services.

Sources: The picture is taken at a government school in Islamabad

Schools around the world generally and particularly in Pakistan are working on common objectives: These are enumerated as under;

1. Ambition to have the best education and training system in the country.
2. Education is the key to giving every child an equal opportunity in life.
3. Develop desirable social standards, moral and religious values.
4. Develop individual talents.
5. Develop awareness and appreciation of the role of technology in national development and much more.

The schooling system in Pakistan is improving gradually. The private schooling system is stronger than that of Government schools. The meagre budget for health and education in Pakistan has been improved a bit by the current government and some necessary action has already been taken by the retrospective government. However , still, some loopholes exist to improve the schooling system in Pakistan.

Source:
Picture is taken from a private school system in Pakistan

Private schools are charging hiking fees without government decisions. In each street, many schools are being established. These schools have no uniqueness in their syllabus by government sides. The syllabus at government schools is outdated and struck up, though some necessary action has been taken to make it up to the mark to make our students distinguished. Proper attention is required from the educational expert. The Library Systems at Private Sector schools are a bit good and charge a heavy amount in schooling fees for these libraries, but reading trends among students are mournful. The government school in urban areas have their libraries as just a formality. There is no concept of librarians and trained staff at the school level; the libraries that exist are breathing last in the mercy of Allah. Very meagre amounts have been stipulated for library purposes; the principal and managing authority are not spending good funds allotted from the Government side.

Some Association like Pakistan Library Association (PLA), Pakistan Library Club (PLC), University of Peshawar Library Alumni Association (UPLISAA), Pakistan Librarians Welfare Organization (PLWO), Pakistan Library Automation Group (PAKLAG), Islamian Library Information Science Alumni Association (ILISAA) are organizing cultural reading programmes for students at school level. Still, the non-availability of libraries in the schooling system in rural and many in urban areas is shocking. The Government of Pakistan and the educational department at the country and provincial level should take necessary action against these issues. The school should assign a yearly library financial plan adequate for sustainable library expansion to accommodate current and projected requirements. Our children are our tomorrow and being Pakistani veterans, we should protect our tomorrow.

Role of Librarians in Faculty Learning Community

Pakistan Observer, December 30, 2018

The role of libraries has now been changed; libraries were once considered a collection of books or other similar material for recording, organizing and disseminating information. The nature of libraries is changing now, and modern libraries deal more with people than with material and technology. The importance of the role of libraries and librarians cannot be denied, but it is pertinent to mention that the role of the Faculty Learning Community is increasing worldwide in higher educational institutions. What is the faculty learning community (FLC)? "A Faculty Learning community, as a particular kind of community of practice, has been adopted widely as an approach to an engaging community in the cause of student and faculty learning and of transforming institutions of higher education into learning organizations" (Misa Mi, 2015).

The FLC is working to achieve long-term goals around the world. The foremost objective of the FLC is to build university-wide communities through the process of teaching and learning; The FLC is working to investigate new ways that can enhance teaching and learning. It nourishes the scholarship of teaching and its application to the student in the learning process. It is broadening the assessment of learning and evaluating teaching methods. It is a source of collaboration across disciplines; it is a source of enhancing general education and coherence of learning across disciplines; it increases the prestige of excellent teaching and, thus, is a source of financial support for teaching and learning initiatives. The FLC is creating awareness regarding complex situations in teaching and learning. As mentioned earlier, the basic need of today's libraries is to focus on users rather than collections of information. Modern libraries are becoming the hub of user-oriented services. The paradigm of libraries is shifting from a traditional setup to modern digital applications. Similarly, the job of librarians is also adopting new shapes to create more opportunities for patrons rather than giving them quantitative books and other reading material.

The core issues of modern libraries and librarians are to advance the teaching, learning, and researching methods of users in general and faculty in particular. Today's libraries are the centre of social spaces, a community engagement hub, where people can read, think and explore new ideas. They provide spaces where people can share their expertise and foster a culture of a learning organization. The practitioner librarians have set a goal to facilitate users' contributions in achieving the objectives of any organization. In this, the role of traditional librarianship has evolved to create hybrid professionals who have two service objectives: (1) To develop a learning atmosphere; and, (2) To provide those resources that are most applicable to the learning community. Today's librarians can connect faculty members with library resources via information skills. A librarian can help the faculty learning community close their knowledge gap. They provide this assistance by giving access to literature to solve their problems in curriculum development. This is the moral duty of a librarian to create a social learning atmosphere for the faculty learning community. The librarians may take a positive step through these efforts to achieve social interaction among faculty members and administrative staff.

The role of the librarian in community building should not be underestimated in the 21st Century. In this scenario, they may work as a bridge between students, staff, and faculty members. In this role, they may invite faculty members across disciplines to participate in FLC events and activities. As a community builder, the librarian should also participate in the FLC activities to encourage them to various library services to explore opportunities for collaborative teaching and research projects. Community building is relationship building in a different dimension and it upholds the idea of a learning organization to achieve the ultimate goal of improving student learning and outcomes. The librarian should actively participate in all activities to create social spaces to improve the teaching,

research, and learning opportunities for the faculty members across disciplines; in this case, the librarians must remove themselves from the traditional role. Contemporary librarians cannot work in a vacuum. Teamwork and partners are required in any organization to promote services, resources and equipment.

The librarians facilitate the FLC by providing them with the resources, services, and spaces to achieve a common goal of many universities. The teaching faculty and academic librarians share common concerns in "to provide the highest quality instruction to engage the students by developing information literacy skills. "To seek collaboration to keep up with new trends in information creation, use and dissemination, to increase skill in assessment, increasing pressure to publish, feel they don't have enough time, money or staff to do everything they are expected to do, Feel they would benefit from connecting with colleagues who complement and complete what is needed to move projects forward (Andrew et al., 2009)" Interaction between faculty members, administrators and librarians in universities will lead the organization to attain its common goal with a strong relationship between these three pillars. Triangular relationships between them will give a proper solution to any complex situation being faced by universities or similar organizations.

International Association of School Librarianship

Key to bringing users back into the library
IASL, October 2018

Educational institutes in every nook and corner of the world offer library services to facilitate their research activities. But, in the current scenario, unprecedented challenges are being faced by libraries across the globe; even the wealthiest libraries are struggling to meet the growing demands of their users in this age of technology. The relentless pace of change combined with increasing complexity and ambiguity creates difficult and, at times, chaotic work environments. Hence amid static or declining budgets is all the more need for new and improved skills and services.

Albeit information storage, collection development, access and distribution systems are key factors that play an important role in academic activity and are important services offered by libraries. However, suppose the libraries do not offer such services and support such activities by the faculty and academic programmes. In that case, the role of libraries will remain dormant and futile in this growing day and age of technology. Hence for libraries to maintain their role and prominence as actual learning centers need due up-gradation.

The taxonomy of library services is replicated in three terms: Traditional, Contemporary, and Emergent; the Traditional Services include access, collection development, management and information assistance while contemporary services deal with teaching, learning, outreach, and engagement services. However, the main focus of library experts is on Emerging Services, including student services and scholar services. The scholars and students are the key elements of any library that needs to be developed by adopting a proper strategy. Libraries throughout the world are appealing to their users to use these resources for optimum benefits. But, without proper strategy and planning, we cannot achieve these goals.

In present times, the concept of a traditional library along with the services provided has evolved. In traditional library setups, rules are usually hard for common users. For example, library members were not even allowed to touch the books on the shelves. However, the modern library of today is now more about assisting and networking and what not. Gone are the days when library users were sitting in the library all day long making notes and recording relevant data on specific subjects. Now in the new and evolving environment, libraries around the planet have become democratic institutes, where users find everything and anything on their specific topic under one roof in a conducive learning environment with peace of mind.

Although the Mobile Era and its increasing new technologies and the world wide web have adversely affected the youth, one still has to bring the youth back inside the library, a question clinching many academic minds.

While various experts in academia, and library practitioners have suggested many different strategies, as a librarian, I propose the following strategy, which will increase the number of users in academic and public libraries globally. A friendly atmosphere in the Summer and Winter Seasons may be provided to the library users. Many library users are complaining about library timings in academic institutes so that the timings may be increased with additional staff and fixed remuneration. Wi-Fi has become an essential part of the research; many users are on his/her first visit asking about Wi-Fi facilities, and the library must have such facilities to attract more users.

In higher educational institutions, most people are asking about research databases. The concerned library has to provide them access to modern databases. (RFID) Radio-Frequency Identification is a new shape of modern technology implemented in various libraries in developed countries. Under this technology, books and similar items may be scanned through the Theft-Detection System. Computers are the basic tools of modern technologies, which direct the users to search for their desired material. Those libraries which do not have computer services in their libraries are depriving the users. Therefore, computer services with high-speed internet may be provided, which will automatically lure in more users.

In past days the users were getting the library material out for printing and photocopying purposes. Still, in modern libraries, a separate corner may be reserved for printing and photocopying to provide timely services to the students and faculty members. At present day libraries, many libraries have launched tea bars and coffee services for their users, mostly; in the old days, students were spending more time in canteens, but many libraries have not even introduced these services for their researchers in order to spend more time inside their library.

Advanced countries have launched a drawing section in their libraries, presenting the latest art and paintings of their alumni and students. So such a section may also increase the interest level of their students, faculty members and scholars. When constructing a new library, the architecture must keep in mind that there should be a smoking corner for all chain smokers; by taking this initiative, many users will spend more time in the library, if there is no such corner, all smokers will spend more of their precious time outside the library. The traditional art and craft system using physical materials such as 3-D printers, audio and video capture and editing tools are new services offered by library professionals to patrons and are considered as Marker Space Services, launching these services in the libraries. More people will share their technicalities.

Many serious researchers are looking for study booths and carrels; they ought to be provided with such spaces inside the library. Many libraries don't have washroom facilities inside the library. Washroom facilities in a separate corner may also be provided to the researchers and library users.

The mobile charging system is a new service being launched in the modern library. There should be a mobile charging desk under the custody of library staff to oversee the costly mobile of their users. Similarly, the SMS alert system may also be provided to the enrolled students regarding library news, fresh arrivals and other library activities. Those libraries which don't have online public access catalogue facilities are considered traditional libraries.

The OPAC Services may be provided to the patrons in order to search books and other material that what sort of library material is provided by this library. Public education on using electronic resources is a new service; the library staff must educate their users about their electronic and digital library services from time to time. The modern library does offer e-mail services to their end-users. The users may be given a chance to connect themselves with library staff in any demand or research queries.

The library staff may enhance the user's interest while organizing different literacy programmes. Different services have been introduced to provide updated knowledge to their end-users in the age of technology. The up-gradation in technology from time to time may also be encouraged to enhance the reader's interest. The youth are searching for a job after availing of the degree. The library staff may organize the job-hunting techniques for the youth by inviting experts in relevant fields, and similar other programmes may also be introduced for the youth inside institutions.

An Oscar Award Movie or best academic award-winning movies week may also be organized for the patrons to get some free time to watch the movie. Present-day libraries have also launched these services at national and international levels, but the higher authority may be involved by taking this initiative. The literary-cultural day may be organized for the students, such as the Poetry Programmes, etc.Social networking through different media may also be launched in order to increase the interest level of the users. These services may also be provided to the end-users. Instant messaging reference services are new services being launched in various libraries in developed countries. Web 2.0 technologies are the demand of the day; these technologies may be used to interconnect the users that what the library has to offer. A visitor log system may also be used to produce daily, weekly, and monthly reports of the library visitors. By adopting this system, the library staff may note the number of users who visit the library weekly and monthly. The current era of technology has doubled the role of library services; one can find the location of the libraries through virtual tour media. One can visit the library from a different angle through this technology. Rich Site Summary **(**RSS) feed services may also increase the interest level of the users; this technology may be made a part of modern libraries. Keeping in mind the strategy mentioned above, as a veteran librarian who is very supportive of adapting to change, I can say without a doubt that if the following suggestions are implemented, your library will become a hub of knowledge, and there will be far more visitors.

Why should we have more Libraries in Pakistan?

Pakistan Observer, September 16, 2018

Albert Einstein once said that "the only thing that you absolutely have to know is the location of the library." Libraries are great assets for a progressive community, where knowledge meets the mind and where nations make real progress. In short, Libraries are gates to the future. However, it is unfortunate that not enough importance is given to such institutions. Across the world, authorities are reluctant to invest in libraries, let alone provide opportunities to libraries; for them, it is an easy way to save money without realizing that they are spoiling the future of the next generation. They are closing the gates of libraries that should be opened.

Educational institutions and libraries are places where we gain knowledge in order to build a nation. However, most of our academic institutions have no libraries, and even if they do exist, they lack professional librarians. For this, we should follow the policy of the right man for the right job. The librarian is like a sailor who sails the ship in the right direction. Here, it is pertinent to mention the heart-touching quote of Neil Gaiman "In the age of the internet and digital times Google can bring you back 100,000 answers, a librarian can bring you back the right one."

Great scholars and intellectuals always depend on good libraries. Interestingly, many scholars have their own libraries in their homes. Going back to history, many scientists like Albert Einstein were great admirers of books. Once he was asked how he could make our children intelligent, he replied wisely: "If you want your children to be intelligent, read them fairy tales. If you want them to be more intelligent, read them more fairy tales." Those genius people understood the value of reading which the new generation now fails to understand.

We can also give our children the best learning environment, where he or she can read and nourish his or her future on the right path. As the world population increasingly grows, the demands of the masses are also increasing, which is thus leading to an increase in the demands of the masses regarding high-quality education, more institutions, and greater libraries that need to be built to fulfil the demand. Should also be built:

R. David Lankes says, "Bad libraries build collections, good libraries build services, great libraries build communities." The libraries are a storehouse of different knowledge, and different knowledge gives different ideas. Stephen Fry articulated that "An original idea that cannot be too hard, the library must be full of them". Society can grow more if there are good libraries, libraries are guardians of the past and the future, the future of a nation is kept in education and only educational institutions are not responsible for offering the masses the best source of education, libraries are a counterpart of educational institution and education not only changes our future but also links us with past. Ray Bradbury says, "Without libraries, what have we? We have no past and no future". The libraries play a positive role in creating a progressive community; as Landy Bird Johnson, an American Socialite said, "Perhaps no place in any community is so democratic as the town library, the only entrance requirement is interest".

Our country is usually looking forward to democratic leaders, recently general elections were held in which Imran Khan was selected as the 22nd Prime Minister of Pakistan. We hope that Pakistan will make positive changes in all aspects under his leadership, especially in focusing on libraries and producing more libraries across the country.

Some more opportunities will also be created for the library professionals as he promised that after taking charge as the prime minister of Pakistan, he will create 10 million jobs for the people of Pakistan. The library professionals should also be given such opportunities by advertising new jobs in various departments. The elected prime minister is a ray of hope for the entire community of Pakistan and we all are standing with him to overcome these challenges. As green Pakistan requires more trees, similarly, for a prosperous Pakistan, we need to build community schools and libraries. The government of Pakistan should adopt a strict policy against the closure of libraries; a message should be conveyed to all institutions that if one does not value libraries, then one does not value knowledge and wisdom. One is silencing the voices of the past and damaging the future of the next generation.

The world's largest library, the Library of Congress, is situated on Capitol Hill in Washington, D.C the United States of America; it has more than 38 million books, 3.6 million recordings, 14 million photographs, 5.5 million maps, and 70,000 manuscripts and much more material from all over the world in 450 languages. Developed nations first develop their libraries; we hope that Pakistan will also follow in the footsteps of a developed nation by building more libraries in every nook and corner of the country.

It is a fact that strong nations always make strong decisions by strong leaders and strong leaders can be produced by strong education and strong education comes by reading more books. The best place where one can quench their thirst for knowledge is libraries. Readers are a great asset to every nation. They ought to provide libraries in their community. By taking community libraries in Pakistan, I assure you that this fertile land will produce more great readers to lead this nation. Finally, I will quote the kind saying of W. Fusselman, who says, "Today a reader, tomorrow a leader."

Human Personality: The Role of Books

Pakistan Observer, June 12, 2018

According to the Free Dictionary, a book is the acronym of Belt-in Orderly Organized Knowledge or Best of Our Knowledge. Every book presents knowledge in an organized manner. Vera Nazarian, a writer of fantasy and science fiction, is of the view that "Whenever you read a good book, somewhere in the world a door opens to allow in more light".

Reading is derived from the word 'Iqra' in the Holy Quran. 'Iqra' was the first word revealed to the Prophet Muhammad (Peace be upon him). The Quran is a source of great knowledge above all knowledge in the universe. The book of Allah, like the other holy scriptures, advises mankind to seek knowledge and educate oneself.

Throughout the Holy Quran, references are made to the power and benefits of reading. The word "Fatabayyanu" is used for research in the Holy Quran, which is mentioned in verse number 94, part number 5 of sura Al-Nisa. The Quran tells us to research before presenting one viewpoint. Hence there is no doubt that reading is a great source of research and knowledge. Books lead one to discover new facts and, at times, unknown horizons. As W. Fusselman quite rightly said 'today a reader tomorrow a leader".

History witnessed that great leaders were once readers. Neil Gaiman, a known author of English literature, stated "A book is a dream that you hold in your hand." Which holds as books bring your dreams to reality. History witnessed that the great earners were great learners. As M. Tremper quoted "you read to learn you're bound to earn."

Books in a room are like a soul in the body. Marcus Tullius Cicero, a Roman statesman and great admirer of books, said that "a room without books is like a body without a soul." Books are not just the soul of a body. They are companions that stay with you throughout your life - as the ideas and knowledge they impart make a lasting impression.

Ernest Hemingway stated in his book that "there is no friend as loyal as a book." A book is a best friend that gives you light in the dark. One who loves books will love creatures, and one who loves creatures will love the creators.

Books make a man different in society. Great books are great advisers. Those who read more books will find that they are more open to societies, change, and understanding the psychology that underlies human behaviour. This can all be understood by reading the right books that contain the right knowledge. Many books bring positive changes in human personality, but the best books make you move higher. Francis Bacon said, "Some books should be tasted, some devoured, but only a few should be chewed and digested thoroughly."

Love with books can make you upright, trustworthy and loyal to society. You become better by expanding your mind and acquiring new knowledge, and the books will allow you to see the world in many different ways.

Books can be read to bring changes in human personality for the following reasons (1)Widens our mental horizons (2)Improves our character (3)Makes us feel good (4) Makes us smarter and nicer (5) Books increase the capacity of our working memory (6) Books makes us more empathetic (7) Books provides us Mental Stimulation (8) Books increases positive thinking in mind (9) Books Enhances problem-solving skills (10) Books enable us an expressive communicator (11) Books increases our Analytical Thinking Skills (12) Books are enhancing fluid reasoning skills (13) Books makes you emotionally intelligence (14) Books improve brain connectivity, etc. Keeping the few benefits in mind, several ideas make your brain more enthusiastic by gaining maximum information while reading good books. Even the personality of a man can changes and progress through a good book. The book can expand one's capacity to absorb, understand and reflect. Apart from reading good books, one can get better writing skills in their academic and performance evaluation. Books are produced across the globe for the human to read them. Joseph Brodsky points out, "There are worse crimes than burning books. One of them is not reading them."

Cutting-edge Tech & Library Services

Pakistan Observer, May 12, 2018

According to the Technopedia Technology Website, Cutting-edge Technology refers to technological devices, techniques, or achievements that employ the most current and high-level IT developments; in other words, technology at the frontiers of knowledge. Leading and innovative IT industry organizations are often referred to as "cutting edge." The cutting edge is also known as leading-edge technology or state-of-the-art technology". The basic aim of libraries is to achieve the goal of Acquiring, storing, preserving and organizing information and distributing it on a large scale. In an era of Information Technology, many new features and devices have been implemented to impart the best possible services to the end-users, forging closer work relations with other departments; libraries in the modern era have embraced many technologies which bring users closer to the services being offered by the libraries. For example, access to full-text journal databases impacts the acquisition of serials. At the same time, reference and interlibrary loan departments use full-text databases to bring the information and client together in a timelier manner.

The libraries of the current era face many challenges. As research and services are reshaping, and the needs of researchers are increasing, people don't have time to visit the libraries and get the desired material of their choice without wasting time. Cutting-edge technology has brought a revolution in all walks of life. Similarly, libraries have also hugged this kind of technology for the best possible services. To offer quick and quality services and information to its users, libraries are becoming a trendsetter in the age of digitization. The world is a global village, and information in one corner of the world quickly spreads to the other corner in no time. The libraries in the global age have adopted new technologies which work for the betterment. The innovative styles in academic libraries are attracting more users in the cutting-edge era. Some popular technologies in the current scenario being adopted by libraries in developed countries are listed below:

Big Data: To create a personalized user experience, the library uses big data. This technology aims to provide the user with information about their choices, providing resources and services under this technology, the librarians must keep their data in mind.

Virtual reality: The users may be brought closer to the library. Under this technology, virtual reality technology has been implemented in developed countries, including training/workshops and a virtual tour of the library. Augmented Reality: This technology is based on combining digital with reality; in Pakistan, people are also curious to implement the same technology in model libraries.

Artificial Intelligence: In our daily activities Artificial intelligence is gaining more attraction. These applications focus on delivering information to the users. People consider it a challenging job for the libraries, but the name denotes artificial, not human. By adopting this feature in services, the libraries can connect people to the information easily.

Blockchain Technology: Under this technology, a decentralized database can be used, which provides access to everyone to the pseudonymous digital transaction via networking, the data can be collected and stored for user accessibility Internet Of Things: This technology has gained more momentum, as it has become essential for users, RFID and Internet of things are connecting various devices which can be used for transferring the data, in case of an Internet of things the data can be transferred over the internet only. Library mobile apps: Mobile apps have become a top trend after

the invention of Android applications. Through these apps, people have access constantly to their mobiles. By adopting mobile apps in the library services, the library will gain more usability. Converting services through mobile apps may connect patrons and users on one page. **Self-Service Printing, Copying, and Scanning Solutions:** As many people don't print at home, under this service, central access to printing can be given to the users to print pages of their choice and pay dues online for the services.

3D printers: 3D printing has become a highly debated topic for the last few years. Its cost is becoming cheaper. People in developed countries have been granted such services to get 3D printing at nominal charges. Robots: Robot's technology in the 21st century has great value; in Library services, many developed countries have implemented such technology, which is helpful for the users and patrons. Drones: A drone is a small flying device that can be controlled remotely. Many librarians have implemented such technology in their libraries. These drones can provide services to handicapped people and those who don't have time to physically visit the library. So, the implementation of this technology will give more services to the users directly.

Digital Interface for Printed Books: Fujitsu has developed a prototype device that can be used to highlight the desired information in a digital book. For this purpose, a finger link may be used for a digital object. Everyone was talking about physical objects in the real world. By implementing this technology in the library services, one can find and highlight the important excerpts. Thus, it is a combination of the real world with a digital object. Many libraries can implement these kinds of cutting-edge technologies in their services. Governmental institutes with huge amounts of budgets can buy these technologies in their libraries, and many other massive technologies are being implemented in developed countries, like Me Card Technology, easy video creation, etc. If these kinds of technology have been implemented in the libraries of Pakistan. The users /researchers will gain quality services in no time.

The Power of Reading

Pakistan Observer, April 28, 2018

According to the Oxford Learner's Dictionary, the term reading is "the act of somebody who reads or the action or skill of reading written or printed matter silently or aloud." There are many types of reading; the four main types of reading techniques are the following (1) Skimming, (2) Scanning, (3) Intensive (4) Extensive. Skimming is that type of reading in which readers can get a general idea of the meaning as opposed to the scanning technique, which is reading to find specific information, e.g., titles, headings, figures or names, reading newspapers, messages, and e-mails to get general ideas and there is no need to read them deeply. Scanning is a method of reading habit that is useful to review material in general; it is a speedy source of reading material for acquiring general ideas, not in-depth knowledge. Unlike skimming, in scanning, people can get information about a specific fact or even short information relevant to the individual. In scanning, people can get the desired information in the least possible time; the best example is to find out the phone number of your friend in a phone directory. Intensive Reading is essential reading in-depth and is usually done in the class, with each student having the same text. Intensive Reading is also known as "Narrow Reading," it may direct a reader to read the selected material or similarly related topic which best matches the subject or the area. Intensive Reading creates a rapid reading practice, also interpreting the text by using textual and non-textual information. Extensive Reading is considered a type of reading, which is carried out to achieve a general understanding of a text explained by Brown 1989. Many readers are using the extensive type of reading strategy in which reading texts for enjoyment and developing general reading skills. When learners read a lot, they meet thousands of lexical words, which build up the reader's vocabulary. When we are reading some printed material, we find our ignorance and get more advanced knowledge and new ideas that help us achieve our goals and solve our problems by discovering new knowledge. One can improve himself/herself by reading more and more books. A person can improve his personality by reading some informative and enlightening books. He gets new ideas that help them in self-improvement.

There are a few tips which improve reading habits in masses, these tips are mentioned below.
(a) Determine your reading goal. All people are reading to achieve a specific goal. Most people read to pass exams, but some people read to gain awareness. Maybe so, before reading any book, the reader ought to set a goal: why he/she is reading this book or any other printed material. (b) Make a list of books for each month: Once you set your reading goal for the year, you'll need a list to back it up. Write a list of the amazing books you want to read. (c) Read at least 10-20 pages a day: If you are looking to create a consistent reading pattern, then setting out a particular number of pages per day would work out perfectly. Consider setting aside at least 10-20 pages per day to read, especially if you have a busy schedule. (d) Fix your reading time: Many people have a busy schedule that disturbs an ideal routine of work. Make some time free for reading and fix your time in such a way that within this time, no other work should be done except reading. (e) Deciding what to read: If you have spared some time for reading, it is also the reader's responsibility to read stuff that makes them joyful reading such material. (f) Get recommendations from friends. If you don't know what to read: ask your friends. find the best books in your surroundings, or go to the library to borrow them. (g) Go to book festivals. In big cities, many book fairs and festivals are organized by academic institutes and book suppliers; get some time and visit there and find books of your choice. (h) Spend some amount on Books. The last thing necessary for all readers is to cut some amount from your pocket money and buy books of your choice. If one can spend money on buying books, he or she may read them in spare time. When

one can spend some amount on printed material if it is impossible to get the book at high prices, go to an old bookshop and find books of your choice. By adopting such strategies, one can become a good reader. Once the habit of reading improves, society becomes more civilized by reading more books and one can have more knowledge and become confident in personal life, which helps to fight depression and proper decision-making in life.

Research Goes Digital

Pakistan Observer, April 20, 2018

In past years, researchers usually visited the library to consult relevant material and find information of their choice. To fulfil the research needs of the knowledge seeker, librarians were considered as curators of the material. Now the concept has changed for both librarians and researchers. On January 1, 1983, the ARPANET introduced TCP/IP and started its works by introducing the modern net from their networks. A computer scientist Tim Berner-Lee introduced the World Wide Web in 1990. The material in the age of technology gained more momentum when, publishers, suppliers and libraries became a hub of knowledge in the new era of technology. The researchers and librarians became autonomous in interaction with each other. A report presented by Miniwatts Marketing Group in 2015 has explained that at the end of 2014, there were more than three billion Internet users and CISCO proved that the Internet traffic has grown to quadruple and one-half of the world's population have got access to the Internet in 2018.

Connecting researchers with appropriate resources was considered as the sacred duty of librarians in the traditional setup. With the overwhelming volume of information being produced in electronic formats after the advent of the digital age, such as online search engines, accompanying multitude, and other collaboration tools, library and librarians' role is diminishing. But, we know that rapid information has become quite a chore to find and evaluate them. The librarian is overcoming these challenges to provide the users with the optimum benefit to facilitate the best possible knowledge. So, the role of the librarian is changing but not diminishing in the era of information technology. The changing nature of librarianship in the modern era is far better than in the past, as the volume of data is produced overwhelmingly. Organizing them for the users to access them in a short period is increasing the scope of librarians.

The libraries of the 21st Century depend on technology. As technology evolves fast and continuously, the users' information needs to change and have more expectations from librarians. Librarians need to continuously update their technological skills in parallel with the technological changes that occur. Academic libraries need to adjust to the evolution of technology. Librarians need to accept their new roles and duties and respond to these changes by learning how to use the new digital technologies effectively. The revolution in technology has brought about critical changes and a demanding environment in academic libraries. The introduction of technology in libraries has changed the way librarians work, their duties and their roles. In the past, traditional libraries were physical buildings where users could visit them and find printed books. Traditionally, the librarians were responsible for the collection development, material processing, and services provision without using computers. Nowadays, academic libraries make use of technology. They provide printed material and digital material that is born digital and material that is digitized (converted from analogue to digital).

Computerized the operations of traditional libraries to digital libraries in the modern era has changed the nature of libraries and librarianship, Providing reference services, acquiring library materials, cataloguing library materials, and preserving and diffusing the services through a computer has changed the role of traditional librarians to information manager. Traditional libraries will continue to provide services as there is a great bond between digital and traditional libraries. Both are serving society better, and librarians' role will continue to keep a balance between digital and traditional libraries. As today's age is the age of information technology and role of libraries has also been changed. The research is based on authentic information and authentic information couldn't always be found openly via the Internet. In-library terminology, there might be a proper use of the electronic

Material in a systemic mode known as the digital library. The term digital library was first used by computer scientists referring to the electronic version of a library. The truth is that the term digital library explains nothing more than the nature of its collection. "A digital library is a collection of digital representations of numerous media types, such as documents, images and sounds that are stored in an information repository and are available through a local computer network or anywhere via the Internet." Keeping in mind the basic needs of the researchers and library community, a library must hug the digital application to facilitate them with the best possible services.

Library Strategy for Distance Learners

Pakistan Observer, April 12, 2018

United States Distance Learning Association defines the term Distance Learning as "the acquisition of knowledge and skills through mediated information and instruction. Distance Learning encompasses all technologies and supports the pursuit of life-long learning for all". "The Term Distance Learning encompasses many different formats including, but not limited to, online courses, interactive broadcasts or video conferencing to designated sites, live classes in remote locations, pre-recorded programmes broadcast locally or available for loan on videotape or correspondence courses."

In the rapidly growing field of distance learning, advancements in technology have been a major factor in establishing many programmes, with a presence in most colleges and universities. In academic libraries today, distance learning is a prominent topic for distance learners. In higher education, students have a distinct need to manage large quantities and qualities of information in the era of modern technology. With many data in numerous formats, the students must be abreast with developed skills, which can help them locate, evaluate, and use information in the most meaningful ways. To respond to the students, locate, evaluate and use this information, academic libraries must improve their ability and liabilities to help them better understand and motivate them to use these specific sources. Furthermore, the librarians in academic libraries must identify the end-users especially the programme being offered by the academic institutes for distance learners, the nature of the subject and demands of the users, what their needs are and what they expect from the librarians to help them in order to fulfil their academic needs.

Marketing of library services to the students is an important tool for academic libraries because, under these services, the libraries may access the end-users, whether students or faculty members. By adopting this strategy, the faculty members, users and distance learners will integrate the research assignments into their curriculum and stress the importance of the specific library. The library must offer its information on the website of degree awarding institutes, which will clearly define the courseware, bulletin boards and other tools relevant to distance learners. Direct marketing tools could also be used to bring awareness among the masses in distance learning. For this purpose, an e-mail list must be compiled for all enrolled students and faculty members, and a piece of information must be shared with them via e-mail. By adopting this strategy, one might be well aware of what services and resources this library has. One can also contact the library staff via email if any query comes to mind of the library users. The library can help them in a better way by viewing his response in reverse email. The students will use the library effectively when they see the direct value of the academic libraries in their research, which succeeds them in their academic norms.

The new innovative tools adopted by modern libraries at the university level are sources of promoting library services; in this regard, web 2.0 technology can serve the community in the least possible time. Many libraries at the academic level promoted web pages. They are attracting more users to their library by providing these services through social networking sites like Facebook, Twitter, Wikis, Linked In, RSS, and other sources of information that can bring together the library users with the library staff. These are new sources of communication adopted by modern libraries. Non-traditional clientele requires traditional resources and services for distance learners; the library must think moderately by adopting new tools to provide them with better services to fulfil their academic needs. Providing traditional resources and services to the non-traditional clientele of distance learners, the librarians have to think of new innovative ways for the outside library users.

By adopting these tools, the library staff can provide better opportunities to distance learners. To meet the needs of distance learners, all librarians must develop new and innovative ways to provide them better services; The librarians must adopt a strategy that can promote reading and learning services for their members outside the library. librarians must understand users' requirements by surveying via e-mail, and by asking their demands and subject matter; a librarian can provide them better services. All distance learning awarding institutes must vacate a portion of their libraries. Therefore, one can get the desired question from the service provider librarians, and the librarians must be answering them keeping in mind their query. By adopting such a strategy, our country can grow more by educating the masses outside the library.

Role of Libraries in Peace, Security

Pakistan Observer, December 11, 2017

Since 9/11, there has been massive discussion on peace and security. A subject expert has presented many strategies and suggestions to overcome this menace of terrorism. Unrest is everywhere globally, and people are trying to bring forward some strategy that is helpful for the citizens to let them in a peaceful and secure environment. Governments worldwide should maintain peace, security, and protection of the lives and properties of individuals. The important function of the Government is to guarantee the rights and freedoms of its citizens. National security is a part of the major challenges. The use of information can help wind down the effects of the series of terrorist attacks, intra- and inter-ethnic catastrophes, religious and communal clashes that have destroyed lives and properties.

Libraries are playing a key role in promoting national security and peace among the masses. As we know, libraries are sources of information in printed and electronic shapes. Information is issued to improve behaviour through new ideas or knowledge extracted from changes and increased efficiency in all humans in an environment. Governments and citizens need information; it helps make them aware of happenings around them.

When people are informed, they know how to act, what to do in crises, and how to be more security conscious. When people are well-informed, they can participate in political and developmental activities. They can relate to the media and other information, content providers, express themselves easily, contribute ideas and cultures, and learn about the beliefs and customs of others. Over the years, libraries have been instrumental in providing individuals with the opportunity to access a range of information. This information, be it electronic or otherwise, has been invaluable in helping to shape opinion, as well as form a basis on which decisions are made. Such information enables accurate and timely actions and ultimately helps to contribute to positive outcomes. Libraries can, therefore, be seen as an agent of socialization through their provision of information in printed and electronic formats. Nation's peace and security are important not only to the Government but to all people all over the globe. The development of any society largely depends on the security of the lives and properties of all citizens. From the American Revolution, World War I, and World War II to the Afghanistan War to the present time, libraries have been instrumental in giving the Government and civil society news, information, and feedback to help chart meaningful paths for their lives, thereby enhancing effective decision-making.

The information must be made available that can promote peace, unity, progress, peaceful coexistence and harmonious relations among all communities in libraries. Librarians, in providing access to such information, should be instrumental in promoting peace and sectarian reconciliation. Libraries provide individuals and the community with various printed and electronic information on issues important to a nation. In times of political violence, religious extremism, communal violence, and disputes of maritime security and transnational crime amongst others, communities, citizenry, and leaders can all come together and access useful information for a peaceful resolution. Libraries should focus on social networking to enlighten the public. They should collaborate with other information specialists like the media and public relations officers to organize seminars, lectures, conferences, book fairs, workshops, displays, and exhibitions on current issues and news publications about the subject. They can also provide current information to the public through the use of newspaper clippings, electronic resource maintenance, references, and reprographic services of selective dissemination of information, social networking platforms, and current awareness services

to support bibliotherapy, peacekeeping, and become a forceful agent of change in the society. Our leaders in Pakistan should also be proactive in securing every citizen's life and property.

Peace and security for the citizens are possible by educating them with the latest information and libraries' sources of information in printed and electronic format. Libraries are key institutions by help security persons and citizens overcome this curse. The librarians and information experts can provide the best information to the citizens where one can educate himself, and herself to promote peace and blot out terrorism through knowledge, and knowledge can be by reading more and more books and citizens can't buy books in their pocket’s money, only libraries can help them to educate them by bringing peace and harmony in the citizens.

Helping Library Professionals

The Express Tribune, June 28, 2014

Those days are gone when librarians would sit in a room full of books and would be asked by library users to help with locating materials that the latter needed. In today's era, librarians have become more like information specialists and generalists. Even in Pakistan, the nature of libraries is truly changing, especially since many of them have multimedia collections and resources, and the trend is increasing. The world has truly become a global village due to modern technologies, and even social media platforms such as Facebook and Twitter can be of much use to librarians.

The role of the Higher Education Commission's Digital Library is a crucial one. People can access worldwide databases through it, and librarians can help them obtain useful information. Coupled with this is the increasing trend among many people not visiting libraries physically and utilizing digital and online services to download/access the materials they need.

Because of the changing nature of the librarian, a new word has been coined, and it is 'cybrarian,' taking into account the increasingly IT-linked nature of the job. An expert says that a cybrarian "is a person who integrates and infuses, and injects internet technology into education…. The Cybrarian is community-oriented, which means the Cybrarian helps families, businesses and government integrate the internet into the educational environment in a coordinated effort". The problem is that in Pakistan, most of the time, librarians are seen as nothing more than clerks — and this couldn't be further from the truth. To make matters worse, governments have hardly done anything to improve the general standard of library professionals in the country. The curriculum taught at library schools is not regularly updated, and there is no uniformity in scale as far as library professionals are concerned. I would say that the provincial education ministries can play a crucial role because they have the resources needed to train library professionals in much-needed skills related to management, technology, and communications. The government is requested to pay attention to this neglected profession.

University of Peshawar Library & Information Science Alumni Association-Federal Branch)
Blog Writing, November 4, 2013

The University of Peshawar (UoP) (www.upesh.edu.pk) is a public sector university located in Peshawar, the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province of Pakistan. The university was established in October 1950 by Mr. Liaquat Ali Khan, the first Prime Minister of Pakistan, as an expansion of Islamia College Peshawar, founded in 1913. The University of Peshawar offers educational facilities from nursery to Ph.D. It operates as a residential campus spread over 1,000 acres (4 km2). The university also has a summer campus at Bara Gali, 25 kilometres from Abbottabad, at an altitude of 7,700 ft (2,350 m) above sea level. The university comprises six faculties with forty postgraduate departments, four centres, two centres of excellence, four colleges, and three high schools. The enrollment of students is about 20,000.

Department of Library and Information Science:
The Central Library of the University of Peshawar started functioning in 1951. Also, it established the Department of Library and Information Science in the annexe of the Central Library in 1962 to fulfil the requirement for trained library professionals in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. It started a postgraduate diploma course, DLS, which was later renamed as B.L.I.Sc. Despite a lack of funds, teaching staff, building, etc., the Master's Degree Programme in Library and Information Science started in 1983-84. Since its inception, the Department has produced more than a thousand LIS graduates. Now the Department is located on the 1st floor in the newly constructed building of the Faculty of Arts.

History of UPLISAA Federal Branch:
UPLISAA Federal Branch (the University of Peshawar Library and Information Science(LIS) Alumni Association www.uplisaai.org) was founded on June 23, 2013, at the Federal level under Library and Information Science Professionals' meeting Khyber Pukhtoonkhwa serving in Islamabad and Rawalpindi. The main purpose of this Association was to combine the former Library and Information Sciences (LIS) graduates from the University Of Peshawar (UOP), working in institutions located in Islamabad and Rawalpindi. UPLISAA, Federal Chapter also offers honorary membership to LIS professionals from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province (maybe graduated from universities other than UoP.

Vision for UPLISAA Federal Branch:
The vision of this Association is (1) to promote the excellence of members of UPLISAA, (2) to promote goodwill, cooperation and friendship amongst them and (3) to support and assist professional growth, recognition, continuing education and research in the field of Library and Information Science (LIS).

Objectives:
To provide an environment of interaction among the graduates of the Department and the current students.

- To provide a platform for the graduates to foster and promote interpersonal relationships among older students of the Department.
- To provide an opportunity for the current students to seek guidance from the graduates on matters of personal interest.
- To put forth efforts to promote the welfare of the alma mater.
- To benefit the current students from the experiences of graduates concerning the job market, job search and career planning.

Achievements:

- It has arranged 11 successful meetings to uplift this Association.
- Till its inception, 34000 people have visited this website up till now.
- Approximately 100 people visit its website daily.
- Till its inception, 500 members joined this Association to view the jobs and other activities about the library profession.
- Till its inception, it has published 500 jobs regularly for library professionals in various newspapers in government and private sectors.
- The most important feature of this Association is to aware library professionals all over Pakistan about new jobs published on its website on a volunteer basis.

World Book and Copyright Day-Pakistan's Perspective

Blog writings April 24, 2013

World Book or World Book Copyright Day peoples also known as an International Day of the Book or World Book Days. Always celebrated on 23rd April every year. The bookseller in Spain took the initial steps regarding an author named Miguel de Cervantes, who died on the same date. For the honour of that author's first time in Spain, this day was celebrated. Still, later, on 23, April 1995 UNESCO stated this date to celebrate every year because on this date the birth and death anniversary of William Shakespeare also happened now since 1995 this date has been celebrated all over the world. The main purpose of Copyright Day is an occasion to pay a worldwide tribute to books and authors and to motivate people to discover the pleasure of reading and promote reading habits in the public community, publishing new materials and protecting the rights of an author and copyright issue of peoples who are taking a keen interest to publish something in their concerned field. In Pakistan, this day is celebrated by the Department of Libraries, Alumni Associations and Universities bringing awareness amongst people to promote reading habits and live books worth in the community. People are taking a keen interest in celebrating this day in Pakistan. On 23rd April to remember this day, the Education Department of Pakistan and the Department of Libraries also celebrated. People were informed through calls due to a shortage of time. Most of the people joined this day and a walk was arranged from D Chowk. At Punjab University, a library seminar was also arranged by Prof Dr. Arifa Syeda Zuhra. PU Vice-Chancellor Dr Mujahid Kamran, renowned analyst Oriya Maqbool Jan. Whereas, Chairperson Prof Dr Kanwal Amin, Prof Dr Khalid Mahmood, faculty members, representatives of the Pakistan Library Association and Alumni Association, librarians, and students were also present at the occasion and a walk was also arranged. At Peshawar University,Peshawar University Campus Library Association arranged this auspicious day to remind the people of the world of the book.
Peshawar University Campus Libraries Association organized the Seminar at the Sahibzada Abdul Qayum Hall University of Peshawar. Vice-Chancellor University of Peshawar Prof. Dr. Muhammad Rasul Jan was the chief guest of the day. President PUCL Dr Jannat Naeem graced the guest with warm wishes. Some Prominent scholars, Students, and a large number of library professionals contributed a lot as usual. They also arrange a short walk from the admin block to the VC Chowk.

World Book and Copyright Day is an occasion on the 23rd of April every year to pay a worldwide tribute to books and authors and to encourage people to recall the pleasure of reading. It is a way that will lead to renewed respect for those who have made contributions to social and cultural progress. In Pakistan, about 85 percent of people don't even go to the library to issue books and other materials and make a habit of reading. This is shocking news for all of us, although the government of Pakistan spends most of its budget and hires more professionals to encourage people towards the library. Let's join hands to redirect the people and make Pakistan a developed nation because a developed nation can be created only through education and libraries are the best education sources.

Role of Libraries in Modern Society

Dawn, November 25, 2012

Developed societies have a large number of libraries. This is the age of information and so we should redefine the role of information, knowledge, etc. In the old days, libraries were important because they were about reading. They were often built as artistic statements rather than as useful and accessible places of reading. In some cases, the size and architecture mattered more than the function of the library. With time, the trend has changed. Libraries are increasingly more important for more sophisticated learning and education. Societies that develop good libraries are also progressive. We need to emphasize the need for good libraries to change mindsets. In today's fast paced digital era, the role of libraries has become a centre of knowledge, learning and community engagement. Earlier, libraries were considered mere a repository of printed books, however, libraries are now becoming dynamic spaces for digital inclusion, cultural development, lifelong learning and hub of information access. As we know that the libraries are places for free and equitable access to information, hence, its role is crucial in developing countries and particularly for the marginalized community where access to information and education remains limited. In an age where digital content dominates, public and academic libraries bridge the digital divide by offering internet access, digital literacy training and electronic resources. Libraries are also vital hubs for education and research activities, where researchers seek for scholarly material, in such situations, libraries provide them credible resources that enhance their academic performance, librarians being an information provider that guides them to use the information ethically and effectively. For community development and social inclusion, the libraries contribute significant knowledge by organizing workshops, career counselling and health awareness activities for diverse communities in such a situation, the role of libraries serving as safe havens for vulnerable groups like children, elderly people and job seekers. Libraries are also promoting digital transformation in modern societies. In the current era of information technologies, libraries around the globe are connecting the latest innovative technologies like Artificial Intelligence, Augmented and Virtual Realities and much more which empower the users with 21st century skills essential for the society's growth. Libraries are also considered custodians of culture and history. Libraries preserve national heritage and local archives for the forthcoming generation. The purpose of cultural history is to connect the future generation with the cultural fabric of society. In short, the role of libraries in modern society are multifaceted that support educational needs of our society and uphold a democratic value, as society evolve from time to time, so the role of libraries will remain central in empowering and strengthening the community.

About the Author

Abid Hussain is a veteran librarian based in Islamabad, Pakistan, currently serving as Deputy Director Library at the Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad (ISSI). His research interests include library leadership, Digital Library Services, web-based technologies, information literacy, bibliometrics, and information services. Previously, he worked as Digital Library In-Charge at the National Defence University, Islamabad (April 2009 – April 2017) and as Assistant Librarian at Air University, Islamabad (May 2005 – September 2007). Abid has published over 40 research articles in national and international journals, with three more scheduled for publication by June 2025. Additionally, he has contributed more than 150 columns, essays, and Opinion articles to leading English dailies, magazines, and blogs in Pakistan and abroad. He is a regular contributor to Pakistan Observer, Daily Times, Pakistan Today, The News and The Nation. Throughout his career, he has designed, implemented, and assessed library instruction programs, while also training fellow librarians in instructional theory and methods. Academically, he holds an M.Phil in Library and Information Science, along with Master's in Library and Information Science (2006) – University of Peshawar, Master's in Political Science 2011– University of Peshawar , Bachelor of Education (B.Ed) (2016) – Sarhad University, Peshawar. Beyond academia, he actively participates in TV and radio programs advocating library causes and is a member of numerous professional associations, including American Library Association (ALA), Chinese American Librarians Association (CALA), International Association of School Librarianship (IASL), International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA), Association of College & Research Libraries (ACRL), Canadian Library Association (CLA), Association for Information Science and Technology (ASIS&T) and Pakistan Library Association (PLA). His contributions continue to shape the library profession in Pakistan and beyond.

Redefining Libraries in 21st Century

Redefining Libraries in the 21st Century: Transformative Roles for Bridging Research, Education, Technology and Society is a compelling and timely collection of articles by renowned library science scholar Mr. Abid Hussain. The book explores the transformative role of libraries in the 21st century useful for research, education, technology and contemporary society. The articles presented in this volume are blends of traditional and modern technological innovations with a sharp focus on Pakistan's library ecosystem. It presents a broad narrative of a visionary roadmap and a call to action for future libraries. It also illuminates the evolving responsibilities of librarians, the challenges of technologies and the potential for libraries to foster peace, education and civic engagement. It is a valuable resource for students, educators, policymakers, and library professionals seeking deeper insight into the modern role of libraries.

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